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Chairman: Mr. DINU (Romania)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 103: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/C.5/47/16, A/C.5/46/CRP.1, A/46/327 and Corr.1 and Add.1)

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1. Mr. PENEV (Bulgaria) said that his delegation strongly supported the steps taken by the Secretary-General to reorganize the Secretariat with a view to improving its capacity to work for the effective fulfilment of the purposes of the Charter and the mandates issued by policy-making organs.

2. The financial implications of that process were also important. The Secretary-General deserved commendation for having abolished 12 high-level posts financed from the regular budget, with resulting savings estimated at $4.4 million.

3. One aspect of the ongoing process of reform which was even more significant than the financial savings was the related improvements in the Organization's performance. The restructuring must not impair but rather augment the Organization's capacity to carry out its mandates. Bulgaria vigorously backed the efforts of the Secretariat to ensure that any temporary negative effects, unavoidable in such a far-reaching reorganization, did not affect the overall capability to implement the mandates and achieve the aims of the Organization.

4. The restructuring should also reach the lower levels of the Secretariat with respect both to the redeployment of staff and to the creation of opportunities for further financial savings. Bulgaria also supported the closer focus on priority areas achieved by consolidating and rationalizing the use of existing resources. A more rigorous assessment of the current needs and of the means of meeting them would be welcome, with a view to enhancing the Organization's capacity in the establishment and maintanence of peace, security and stability, and in economic and social development.

5. The Bulgarian delegation therefore endorsed the increased emphasis on preventive diplomacy, crisis management and post-conflict peace-building, and it called for more attention to be given to the protection of justice and human rights throughout the world and to humanitarian, social and economic activities. The Secretary-General was to be commended for addressing the relationship between social, humanitarian and human rights issues and policies, and his concept of the integrated treatment of all development

(Mr. Penev, Bulgaria)

issues deserved support. Equally praiseworthy were the efforts of the Secretariat to establish a more dynamic relationship between personnel resources and mandated activities, including the progressive introduction of scientific techniques such as workload analysis.

6. Mr. KHAN (Bangladesh) said that his delegation had studied the revised estimates requested by the General Assembly in resolutions 46/185 and 46/232 (A/C.5/47/2 and Corr.1) which covered only the financial aspects of the restructuring of the Secretariat initiated by the Secretary-General in February 1992. The restructuring process had reduced the number of high-level posts financed from the regular budget from 48 to 36, with savings of $4.4 million. The first phase of the reorganization had covered 54 per cent of the 3,840 Professional posts and 58.9 per cent of the 6,225 General Service posts. In budgetary terms the restructuring and consolidation of offices represented $1,490 million, i.e., 48.1 per cent of the budget for 1992-1993. Although the restructuring had been based on the report of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations, its scale had been of greater magnitude, especially in the areas of political and Security Council affairs, economic and social development, and humanitarian affairs. Although it was still too early to judge the results, his delegation entertained high hopes for them.

7. However, the reform was not an end in itself, and the reduction of expenditure could not be the sole aim. The main objective of any reform ought to be to increase the Organization's efficiency and ensure programme implementation with a good cost/benefit ratio. His delegation would therefore have liked to receive, together with the information on the financial implications of the restructuring, an account of the programmatic impact accompanied by revised estimates.

8. In the context of the far-reaching reform of the Organization his delegation called for greater attention to be given to improvement of the effectiveness of the United Nations role in the economic and social spheres, for it was of vital importance for the developing countries. Peace, security and development constituted an indivisible whole. However, it could be seen that not enough was being done in the economic and social spheres, and the situation must be corrected. In that connection the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s (resolution 45/206), approved by the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, constituted the frame of reference for combating the deterioration in the economic, social and environmental situation of the least developed countries. The Programme of Action stipulated the shared responsibility of those countries and their development partners and the important role of the United Nations system. It was to be hoped that the programme budget and the medium-term plan would continue to give high priority to the needs of the least developed countries.

(Mr. Khan, Bangladesh)

9. Associated with the restructuring process was the question of vacancy management in the context of the difficulty of establishing a precise relationship between staff resources, specific mandated activities, imperfect workload analysis, underfinancing of the regular budget and the ever-increasing new mandated activities given to the Organization. There was a need to establish an internal procedure for examining vacant posts bearing in mind the need for flexibility in the management of personnel resources. It should also be borne in mind that the suspension of recruitment to posts in the Professional category begun in February 1992 might have an adverse programmatic impact: when posts were redeployed and resources were transferred on such a large scale, their total impact on programme delivery must be given serious consideration. He therefore urged the Secretariat to develop rational criteria and justification for such redeployment keeping in mind the long-term needs of the departments and avoiding ad hoc short-term exigencies.

10. In the context of a fast-changing world scenario, the question of redundant programmes and programmes of marginal importance had been raised. That question was linked with the question of priorities. The medium-term plan had clearly mentioned five priority areas: maintenance of international peace and security; the economic development of developing countries; the economic recovery and development of Africa; the environment and international drug control. There was therefore no need to redefine priorities; the balance which such priorities represented should not be disturbed. Bangladesh supported the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) in that area as well as the proposals with respect to the priorities between subprogrammes approved recently by the Trade and Development Board at Geneva. Regarding the 13 posts of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) mentioned in document A/C.5/47/7, Bangladesh agreed with the proposal of the Secretary-General to extend them through 1993 and make proposals concerning their future status in the context of programme budget proposals for the biennium 1994-1995. His delegation also hoped that the recommendations of the Cartagena Commitment adopted by UNCTAD at its eighth session would be fully respected in any recommendations to be made in that regard.

11. His delegation respected the role and authority of the Secretary-General as Chief Executive Officer of the Organization and supported his efforts to enhance the Organization's efficiency, streamline the Secretariat, avoid duplication and waste and rationalize the departments and programme delivery in a cost-effective way. Nevertheless, there were many cases of mismanagement, waste, duplication and corruption. The accountability of programme managers must be emphasized. Programme performance reports should be improved further with analytical reports and assessments of programme implementation. In-depth evaluations and dissemination of the lessons learnt from programme execution were an important instrument to improve programme performance. However, he agreed with the observation of the Chairman of CPC that evaluation remained a neglected child of the United Nations management, and he expressed the hope that work in that area would improve.

(Mr. Khan, Bangladesh)

12. Restructuring should be done within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant General Assembly resolutions. A piecemeal approach to restructuring was not helpful; when reforms continued over a prolonged period, the result was uncertainty, lack of direction and low staff morale. His delegation therefore wished to see a speedy conclusion to the process of reform and restructuring and agreed with the representative of Japan about the need for dialogue with Member States in that regard.

13. The medium-term plan was one of the main policy-making instruments and served as a basis for biennial programme budget formulation. His delegation supported any steps that would make that process simpler and more transparent and welcomed the prototype of a new budget format (A/C.5/47/3); it also supported the holding of a technical seminar as recommended by CPC to review the medium-term plan.

14. The Earth Summit had led to a new approach to the environment and development. Indiscriminate industrialization had already destroyed part of the ozone layer, increased the incidence of cancer and created a greenhouse effect leading to global warming. Global warming could have very dangerous consequences, counting droughts in Africa and raising the sea levels; that situation would directly affect the lowlands of Bangladesh and cause untold suffering to its people. It was estimated that up to one third of Bangladesh's territory could be submerged and that about one third of its population would become homeless and lose its livelihood.

15. Developed and developing countries were equally responsible for the deterioration of the environment. Over the past 10 years, enormous tracts of forest had been destroyed. Extreme poverty led to the cutting down of trees with subsequent harmful environmental consequences. Bangladesh was proud of having launched, over the previous two years, a vast reforestation programme under which millions of trees had been planted.

16. Regarding the procedures and norms for the creation, elimination, reclassification, conversion and redeployment of posts (A/C.5/47/4) his delegation agreed with CPC that it lacked substance and needed more work.

17. Mr. OSELLA (Argentina) speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, namely, the delegations of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela, said he wished to comment on the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan (A/47/16 (Part II)). He agreed on the need to simplify the format of the plan and the procedures for its revision, so as to preserve its strategic nature as part of the budget cycle. He therefore welcomed the initiative of holding a technical seminar, without additional cost to the Organization, to help improve the format of and revisions to the plan. The main aspects of the revision of the plan would depend on the decisions to be taken by the General Assembly in response to the decisions adopted at the eighth session of UNCTAD and at the United Nations Conference on Environment

(Mr. Osella, Argentina)

and Development, as well as on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the Organization. The specialized intergovernmental bodies must play an appropriate role in the drafting and revision of the medium-term plan; in that connection, the contribution of the the Trade and Development Board to the revisions now before the Committee was a welcome exception. He stressed that the medium-term plan must be based on officially agreed intergovernmental mandates and that, in the absence of such mandates, Secretariat reports or memoranda could not serve as a legislative basis.

18. With regard to programme 1 (Good offices and peacemaking, peace-keeping, research and the collection of information), the introduction of new political concepts into the budget and programme process should be governed by the relevant definitions adopted by the General Assembly. That was particularly relevant to the concepts of fact-finding and peacemaking. Given that the concept of preventive diplomacy was currently being considered by various intergovernmental bodies, the revisions to the plan should make it clear that General Assembly decisions on the subject were pending.

19. With regard to programme 4 (Special political questions, trusteeship and decolonization) he felt that the original title of subprogramme 3 should be retained. As to the reference to regional organizations in paragraph 4.28, he felt that United Nations cooperation with such organizations should be in accordance with their respective mandates.

20. Commenting on programme 12 (Global development issues and policies), he said that the wording proposed by the Secretariat for the programme showed that there was still confusion in some areas between the functions of the Department of Economic and Social Development and those of other offices and agencies in the system. It was particularly important to take account of the decisions to be adopted by the General Assembly on the follow-up to the eighth session of UNCTAD and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

21. With regard to programmes 13 (Trade and development), 14 (Trade expansion, export promotion and service sector development) and 15 (Least developed, land-locked and island developing countries, and special programmes), he welcomed the fact that a specialized intergovernmental body, the Trade and Development Board, had revised the Secretariat's proposals, to ensure that the programmes reflected the outcome of the eighth session of UNCTAD; he welcomed the revisions made by the Board, as well as the priorities it had subsequently recommended. In addition, it was vital that UNCTAD should revise the programmes, in conjunction with other organizations in the system, so as to define responsibilities for matters that were of crucial importance to the developing world.

22. With regard to programme 17 (Science and technology for sustainable development) he felt that the environment, as an important aspect of development, should be incorporated in the title and text of the programme.

(Mr. Osella, Argentina)

However, the revision initially proposed by the Secretariat seemed to take too narrow a view, making the environment the sole objective of the scientific and technological activities to be pursued by the Organization. As many of those activities were not directly related to environmental concerns, the original spirit of the programme should be preserved. A corollary of that broader approach was the need to retain the original titles of the programme (Science and technology for development) and of subprogramme 1 (Endogenous capacity-building and resource mobilization).

23. With regard to programme 28 (International drug control), a thorough assessment was needed of the progress made by the Organization in the sector, given the complexity of the problems to be tackled and the specific characteristics of its institutional and financial arrangements.

24. With regard to programme 33 (Regional cooperation for development in Latin America and the Caribbean), he supported the revision of the programme proposed by the Secretariat, since it recognized regional integration and the fight against drug trafficking as spheres of action of the regional commission, bearing in mind its specific institutional mandate. Strengthening the economic ties between the countries of the region was vital for the economic and social development of their peoples. In that respect, ECLAC would help to formulate regional positions better geared to development objectives.

25. With regard to programme 38 (Public information) it was important to ensure that the original mandate of the information centres was not altered by the transfer to the Department of Public Information of the functions of the former Office for Research and the Collection of Information. The institutional arrangements should therefore be revised to enable the Department of Public Information to discharge those new functions.

26. Mr. CHUINKAM (Cameroon) welcomed the restructuring of the Secretariat undertaken by the Secretary-General, but hoped that the exercise would not marginalize certain Member States or lead to a redeployment of resources according to priorities other than those agreed by all Member States. While he welcomed the savings resulting from the reduction in high-level posts, he believed they should be only a by-product of restructuring and not its main aim. There were grounds for wondering whether the organizational changes were really aimed at ensuring effective implementation of mandates. In particular, the new Department of Economic and Social Development had been overloaded with activities, while at the same time its resources were being redeployed to other sectors.

27. It was high time the Secretary-General lifted the temporary suspension of recruitment to posts in the Professional category, which was no longer justified now that the restructuring of the Secretariat had been completed. As the Secretary-General had pointed out, the staff resources of the Organization were, in many domains of activity, stretched to the limit.

(Mr. Chuinkam, Cameroon)

28. However, instead of recruiting additional staff within the limits provided for in the budget, the Secretary-General was asking for a certain degree of flexibility in the management of staff resources. His delegation was not prepared to authorize the Secretary-General to transfer or redeploy resources between sections of the budget without the prior approval of the General Assembly or the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). The existing procedure whereby the Secretary-General consulted with the General Assembly during its sessions, and with the Advisory Committee between sessions, gave him the necessary flexibility to deal with the changing needs and circumstances of the United Nations.

29. He regretted that the Secretary-General's report lacked adequate information on the matter, thus obliging ACABQ to postpone its opinion. The Secretary-General was calling on the General Assembly and ACABQ to take a decision on the proposed new approach before the practical modalities for implementing it had been elaborated.

30. He was pleased to note that the pace of work in the construction of the additional conference facilities at Addis Ababa, had improved and that the total costs of the Addis Ababa and Bangkok projects would not exceed the amounts originally authorized in the budget for 1992-1993. The contractors should be cautioned against using flimsy excuses to delay the termination of projects in order to obtain more money from the United Nations. It might be advisable to consider the possibility of revising the relevant clauses of the contracts in order to avoid such situations.

31. With regard to the granting of travel assistance to least developed countries that were members of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (A/47/454), the predicaments of those countries would persist because the Commission had not been able to rationalize its work as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/56 B. The Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that travel assistance should be granted to those countries.

AGENDA ITEM 112: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/47/416 and A/47/508; A/C.5/47/5, A/C.5/47/6, A/C.5/47/9, A/C.5/47/14 and A/C.5/47/20; A/C.5/46/2, A/C.5/46/7, A/C.5/46/9, A/C.5/46/13 and A/C.5/46/16; A/46/326 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/47/140 and Add.1 and A/47/168 and Add.1)

32. Mr. PENEV (Bulgaria) expressed his delegation's concern at the grave disparity in representation resulting from the coincidence of the freeze in recruitment imposed at the beginning of 1992 and the admission of an unprecedented number of new Member States. It had, in particular, affected the Eastern European Group, which included 15 unrepresented States and only 9 within range. Urgent measures should be taken to remedy that situation.

33. Another source of concern was the negative trend over the past five years with regard to the equitable geographical representation of Member States in

(Mr. Peney, Bulgaria)

the Secretariat. There had been a sharp increase in the number of unrepresented countries, while the percentage of underrepresented countries had remained more or less stable at a high level. The number of countries within range had reached the lowest figure in the past five years while the proportion of overrepresented States had increased. That trend must be radically reversed.

34. The measures taken by the Secretary-General to improve the status of women in the Secretariat were to be commended. The national competitive examinations could be a valuable factor in improving the representation of women while not compromising on the need to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. Intensified efforts by the Administration and programme managers, and greater cooperation from Member States were also needed.

35. He shared the view that membership, population and contribution should be the main criteria for the equitable distribution of posts. Full parity should gradually be established between the membership and contribution factors. Option J in the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/46/2) could serve as a final long-term goal. The increase in both relative and absolute terms in the number of posts to be distributed according to the membership factor was justified by the increase in the number of Member States.

36. His delegation agreed that there was a need for a certain flexibility in calculating the desirable ranges. However, under the current methodology, the flexibility factor of 15 per cent had been replaced by a fixed number of 4.8 posts for a majority of States. In many instances that was equal to nearly 70 per cent of their respective mid-points. It would be desirable, therefore, for the upper and lower limits of each range to be more closely linked to the mid-point.

37. His delegation welcomed the expansion of the national competitive examinations through the holding of examinations for posts at the P-3 level in 1991 and 1992, and endorsed the policies and procedures devised in that connection. Bulgaria would be holding national competitive examinations in the near future.

38. His delegation fully shared the concern expressed by the Secretary-General in his report on the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and related organizations (A/C.5/47/14), and by the staff representatives of the Secretariat in document A/C.5/47/20, especially with regard to the security of United Nations personnel. There was a pressing need to afford adequate protection to United Nations staff members carrying out their duties in dangerous circumstances. He strongly supported the Secretary-General's recommendations in the aforementioned report and in his report "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277).

39. Mr. TOYAMA (Japan) said that the safety and security of United Nations staff had become a matter of great concern because of increasing involvement by the United Nations in peace-keeping and humanitarian missions in areas where there was danger. His delegation strongly supported the statement by the former Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management that the organizations of the United Nations system had a joint responsibility to ensure the safety and security of staff and that they should accordingly provide the necessary contingency planning. A plan should also be formulated to ensure generous compensation for the families of staff members who died on such missions. In that connection, consideration should be given to augmenting the current United Nations compensation scheme by additional private insurance.

40. With regard to the composition of the Secretariat, he noted that the two most important events of the reporting period had been the restructuring of the Secretariat and the consequent temporary freeze on external recruitment to fill vacant posts in the Professional category. While his delegation recognized the need to freeze recruitment during the review of the staffing tables in connection with the restructuring it believed that the restructuring should take fully into account the current unsatisfactory situation with regard to equitable geographical distribution. According to the Secretary-General's report (A/47/416), of the 128 appointments made during the reporting period to posts subject to geographical distribution, only 29, or 22.7 per cent, had been of nationals of unrepresented or underrepresented Member States. Ten years previously, the proportion had been 43.2 per cent. That showed that the situation had deteriorated and that special measures should be taken; for example, the recruitment of nationals from unrepresented or underrepresented Member States should be exempted from the freeze.

41. His delegation also requested the Secretary-General to expand the use of national competitive examinations, since the ratio of appointments to posts at the P-1, P-2 and P-3 levels by means of national competitive examinations during the reporting period had been less than 50 per cent when it should be almost 100 per cent. The process of recruitment by competitive examination should also be speeded up since many highly qualified candidates who did well in the examination became discouraged by the long wait and lost interest in working for the United Nations. In that connection, the plan referred to by the former Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, Mr. Ciss, aimed at accelerating the process so as to complete it within four months of the identification of vacancies, was interesting.

42. The training of Secretariat staff was critical at a time when the United Nations was undertaking many new activities, and staff members had to upgrade their knowledge as their missions changed. It was surprising that only 0.27 per cent of total staff costs was allocated to occupational and management training in the Secretariat, a ratio that was one eighth of that at the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank. Japan strongly supported the development of the comprehensive management development plan referred to by the former Assistant

(Mr. Toyama, Japan)

Secretary-General in his statement, and it was ready to provide all possible assistance in carrying out that plan.

43. With respect to career development, his delegation noted with interest the submission of proposals for the long-term project in that area. However, it reserved the right to comment on them once his Government had thoroughly examined them.

44. Regarding the representation of women, his delegation requested the Secretariat to give priority to the recruitment of women from underrepresented or unrepresented Member States.

45. As to desirable ranges, they were nothing more than a means of achieving equitable geographical distribution. The General Assembly should not expend effort in discussing methodologies but should rather address the broader question of how to ensure that the Secretariat strengthened its recruitment policy in order to achieve the original objective: equitable geographical distribution.

46. Mrs. SUVARNATEMEE (Thailand) observed that unfortunately many States were underrepresented and some even unrepresented. Her delegation, which advocated the strict observance of geographical distribution in the recruitment process, hoped that the Secretary-General would eventually correct that imbalance. Thailand supported an extensive restructuring of the Secretariat, extending even to the highest levels. Nationals from some States must not be allowed to have a monopoly over top positions. Thailand suggested that a time-limit should be put on the terms for senior posts in order to promote a more just geographical distribution within the United Nations system.

47. Although it was not easy to achieve a more diverse geographical representation, there was no need to increase the number of posts in order to eliminate underrepresentation. Any increase in United Nations staff should result strictly from an expansion of the Organization's activities.

48. With regard to staff training, it was surprising that the United Nations was spending only 0.27 per cent of its staff costs on training. There should be an increase in funding for training at the management level.

49. As to the issue of the advancement of women in the Secretariat, her delegation urged the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to achieve the goals set in General Assembly resolution 45/125, according to which the overall participation of women would rise to 35 per cent by 1995 and to 25 per cent for posts at the D-1 level and above. As of 30 June 1992, however, there were no women at the Under-Secretary-General level, while 19 men occupied such posts. Only one woman was at the Assistant Secretary-General level compared to 14 men. At the D-2 level, there were 17 men and only 10 women, and at the D-1 level there were 26 women and 216 men. It was important to remedy the situation, and the career development system would be a useful tool in placing women in posts at all levels.

50. Mr. WLOSOWICZ (Poland) said that the policy and practice of human resources management must be adjusted to all the new problems facing the United Nations and the world community.

51. On the question of the geographical distribution of posts, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/416), only 2,608 posts out of the total 31,127 United Nations posts were subject to geographical distribution.

52. His delegation was of the opinion that the composition of the civilian components of various peace-keeping missions should be based on as wide a geographical distribution as possible. Poland had experienced some difficulties that year in placing its nationals in the civilian structures of peace-keeping missions, and felt that the problem required greater attention on the part of the Secretariat.

53. A whole group of countries remained only marginally represented, in the structures of the United Nations development system, where "new blood" was especially needed. Those were the countries in transition, which had much to learn by direct participation in the operations of the system. To remedy that situation it would be useful to have a clear breakdown by nationality of the personnel tables submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly.

54. In order to achieve broad and equitable geographical distribution of staff, equal opportunity should be given to internal and external candidates and vacancy announcements should be issued and distributed in time. Since internal promotion had become the basic method of filling vacancies, some posts were advertised very late. His delegation reiterated its support for the system of competitive examinations. The report under review, however, did not indicate whether the plan was to hold examinations in 1993.

55. On the question of secondment, Poland was of the opinion that the system could be beneficial to both the United Nations and Member States, since it provided the Organization with a kind of support it might not be able to develop internally. The basis of secondment was a tripartite agreement that should be respected by the three parties involved: the United Nations Secretariat, the Government concerned and the staff member working for the United Nations on secondment.

56. Concerning the representation of women in the Secretariat, despite some progress towards the 35-per-cent target, the status of women in the United Nations was far from encouraging, and it was to be hoped that the Secretariat would continue taking effective measures to correct that situation while fully respecting the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

AGENDA ITEM 111: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (A/47/11)

57. Mr. ALI (Chairman of the Committee on Contributions), introducing the report of the Committee on Contributions, said that at its fifty-second session it had dealt with the assessments of new Member States and with several aspects of the scale methodology.

58. With the exception of San Marino, the establishment of assessments for the new Member States had presented the Committee with the unprecedented task of proposing rates for States which had previously been part of the former Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia. The Committee had decided to do so without affecting the rates of other Member States and on the basis of a uniform approach using available national income and population figures for the years 1980-1989, which constituted the statistical base underlying the current scale of assessments. On the basis of those data, the proportional share of the combined rates of Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine had been calculated for each of the former Soviet Republics. In that manner, all 15 States had benefited proportionately from the ad hoc adjustment of 20 points from 11.10 per cent to 10.90 per cent. An ad hoc adjustment had been made to the rate of the former Soviet Union in 1991, prior to the distribution of 10.90 per cent among Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine for the purposes of the current scale of assessments. The Committee had included Belarus and Ukraine in the current exercise so as to achieve a uniform approach, mindful of the unique manner in which the rates for Belarus and Ukraine had been determined since 1946.

59. The rates proposed for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovenia had also been calculated on the basis of available national income and population data.

60. The rate proposed for San Marino was identical to that approved by the General Assembly in 1991 before it had been a Member of the Organization.

61. The Committee on Contributions had made the proposals contained in its report in full awareness of the concerns expressed to it in written or verbal representations by Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Republic of Moldova, Slovenia and Ukraine. Those Member States had stressed their current economic difficulties and the distorting effect of the rouble exchange rates used. The Committee sympathized with many of those concerns, but it had had to work within constraints that had prevented it from taking current circumstances sufficiently into account. Those deficiencies would be addressed in the context of the next scale, once detailed information on national income, population and exchange rates had been provided by all Member States. The Committee thus viewed its recommendations as an unavoidable transitional step, recognizing that the rates of assessment of the 19 States formerly comprising the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia might undergo considerable adjustment in the preparation of the next scale.

(Mr. Ali)

62. The Committee had prepared illustrative machine scales after careful consideration of the use of uniform exchange rates, debt-adjusted income, a low per capita income allowance formula with a per capita income limit of the average world per capita income and a gradient of 100 per cent, and a method for phasing out the scheme of limits. Annexes I to III showed the results of the application of those factors together with three different approaches to phasing out the scheme of limits. The results achieved through all three approaches demonstrated that most of the effects of the scheme of limits could be eliminated over 2 three-year scale periods. However, the data in annexes I to III must be viewed as strictly indicative.

63. With regard to improvements in the methodology for future scales, the Committee had reviewed its work over the past 12 years on adjustments to national and per capita income in the calculation of the scale of assessments so as to better capture the capacity to pay of Member States. The Committee had recalled the limitations of the indicator approach and the difficulties encountered in selecting appropriate indicators, and had reached agreement on the necessary weights and norms for specific indicators while trying to avoid the danger of double counting and other conceptual problems. The Committee had also explored alternative income concepts, one of which had been used in the preparation of the illustrative scales in annexes I to III to the report.

64. The Committee on Contributions had also considered a progress report on the further development of price-adjusted rates of exchange (PARE), which was summarized in annex IV to the report.

65. Lastly, the Committee had also addressed the question of alternative scale methodologies. In that connection it had recalled a 1986 study on alternative methodologies which had reviewed the methodologies used by other organizations and identified six approaches which were not based on the capacity to pay of member States. At its most recent session the Committee had considered a model scale using a statistical base period of 10 years, which, as mandated in resolution 46/221 D, would be arrived at by distributing average national income weighted by per capita national income, and the calculation of which would be followed by the application of the existing floor and ceiling rates. The Committee on Contributions had been divided as to the validity of that scale, shown in column 5 of annex V to the report.

66. Mr. BURAVKIN (Belarus) said that his delegation firmly supported the basic principles and criteria by which the Committee on Contributions was guided in allocating the expenses of the United Nations among Member States in accordance with their capacity to pay. Capacity to pay, determined on the basis of objective information on national income, should be the key criterion in determining the assessment rate of each State. Accordingly, there had been no reason to think that the Committee on Contributions, at its most recent session (15 June-2 July 1992), would diverge from the unconditional application of that criterion in determining the assessment rates for the new States which had emerged on the territory of the former Soviet Union and had

(Mr. Buravkin, Belarus)

been admitted to the United Nations. Belarus, which did not doubt the professionalism and competence of the members of the Committee on Contributions, expected the Committee to formulate new methodological suggestions and approaches which might have found practical application in establishing and developing civilized relations within the Commonwealth of Independent States. Regrettably, that had not happened. It should be noted that the Committee itself had admitted the vulnerability of some of its conclusions. His delegation firmly believed that the Committee had made a gross conceptual and methodological error which had led to erroneous conclusions and recommendations unacceptable to his delegation.

67. For inexplicable reasons the Committee on Contributions had left unaddressed the political and economic situation of one sixth of the territory of the Earth, where, over a very short time, the once-unified economic complex of the former super-Power had collapsed. Belarus was not convinced of the appropriateness of assessing the contributions of the new States Members of the United Nations by linking them from the outset to the distribution among those States of the contribution of the former Soviet Union.

68. Moreover, it had been a surprise to his delegation to learn, on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, that, by the will of the Committee on Contributions, Belarus, one of the founding Members of the Organization, suddenly found itself among the new States Members of the United Nations. Whatever explanations the Committee on Contributions might offer for its recommendation that the assessment of Belarus should increase 1.5 times (from 0.31 to 0.48 per cent), a number of factors must be noted. Firstly, the financial obligations of Belarus towards the United Nations had already been determined under the scale of assessments for the years 1992, 1993 and 1994 established in General Assembly resolution 46/221, which had been adopted by consensus. The recommendation of the Committee on Contributions that the assessments of Belarus and of Ukraine should be increased was directed, in effect, at revising a scale of assessments adopted by consensus. Accordingly, his delegation considered the recommendation of the Committee on Contributions that the assessment for Belarus should increase from 0.31 to 0.48 per cent to be inappropriate, and called upon the Fifth Committee to seek ways of eliminating that injustice.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
18th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 3 November 1992
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 18th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DINU (Romania)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

CONTENT

AGENDA ITEM 111: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 17: APPOINTMENTS TO FILL VACANCIES IN SUBSIDIARY ORGANS AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS (continued)

(e) APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL

(a) APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY QUESTIONS (continued)

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92-57441 6197S (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/47/SR.18
11 November 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 111: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/47/11)

1. Mr. BAUMANIS (Latvia), speaking on behalf of Estonia and Lithuania in addition to his own country, said that the assessments of the Baltic States raised certain methodological issues that required examination.

2. One fundamental principle on which the Baltic States insisted was the right of States to submit the data, in particular the national accounts and foreign exchange data, used to determine their assessments. The Committee on Contributions had concluded its deliberations on the scale of assessments for 1992-1994 before the admission of the Baltic States to the United Nations at the forty-sixth session. The recommended assessment for each of the three independent Baltic States had been based on the national accounts data and official rouble/dollar exchange rates over the base period 1980-1989, when Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania had been under occupation. At the forty-sixth session, the Baltic States had argued that the official exchange rates overvalued their annual assessable incomes in dollar terms during the base period, and that more realistic exchange rates should emerge from the studies of their economies than being conducted by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The General Assembly, in resolution 46/221, had stated that the assessment rates of the Baltic Republics were to be determined by the Committee on Contributions during its fifty-second session, taking into account the results of the IMF study, and that those assessment rates would be deducted from that of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of 9.41 per cent. At the fifty-second session of the Committee on Contributions (15 June to July 1992), a complete set of exchange rates other than the official USSR exchange rates for the base period had not yet been available from IMF. Accordingly, the Committee had decided to repeat its 1991 recommendation with respect to the Baltic States. IMF had recently provided the relevant information, which supported the argument of the Baltic States against the use of official USSR exchange rates.

3. The Baltic delegations welcomed the efforts made by the Committee on Contributions, within the limits of its mandate, to arrive at a fair scale of assessments. One unprecedented aspect of determining the scale, not covered by the Committee's terms of reference, was that the former USSR had for many years voluntarily accepted, primarily through setting the official rouble/dollar rate of exchange, an assessment that considerably exceeded its capacity to pay. The Baltic delegations could not accept the assessments recommended by the Committee on Contributions (A/47/11, para. 52), which were not based solely on the capacity of the Baltic States to pay, but also included, through the use of the official USSR exchange rate, a share of the excessive assessment of the former Soviet Union. The Baltic States could, however, support new terms of reference for the Committee on Contributions

(Mr. Baumanis, Latvia)

calling for the preparation of a new scale based on capacity to pay according to a methodology that took into account the collapse of the Soviet Union.

4. The length of the statistical base period and the scheme of limits also impacted on the assessments of the Baltic States and other countries in transition. Whereas the intended effect of those principles was to even out economic fluctuations, for the independent Baltic countries they would lead to assessments that would be affected for some years to come by economic data from the period when they had been dependent parts of the former Soviet Union. In that connection, he pointed out that all three Baltic countries had abandoned Soviet statistical methods in favour of the United Nations accounting methodology for market economies. New national accounts data would be submitted to reflect the true situation in those countries between 1980 and 1989.

5. Estonia and Latvia had shown their good will by making partial payments towards their 1991 estimated assessments, while Lithuania had paid in full. If the assessment problem was not resolved, however, there would be far-reaching effects, such as an increase in the number of countries in arrears because of their inability to pay. Latvia could become one of those countries, since its annual total payments to the United Nations system on the basis of the current recommendations amounted to approximately 10 per cent of its total hard currency budget.

6. The financial health of the Organization depended largely upon a consensus that its expenses were assessed fairly and that its monies were spent frugally and efficiently. An approach that reflected the specific situations of States was essential if a consensus was to be built within the diverse membership of the United Nations. The Baltic delegations appealed for a spirit of fair dealing for the greater good of the Organization.

7. Mr. BATIOUK (Ukraine) said that the functioning of the United Nations depended to a large extent on the proper distribution of the financial burden among Member States. His delegation objected to the recommendation of the Committee on Contributions that Ukraine's contribution should be increased by more than 50 per cent, since that recommendation reflected a mechanical approach to the apportionment of the assessment of the former Soviet Union. A radical revision of the scale was required.

8. The Committee on Contributions had made inexplicable blunders in recommending an unprecedented increase of 69 points in the assessment for Ukraine. It had not, in fact, been mandated to revise the assessment of Ukraine's contribution to the regular budget. The General Assembly had determined that the scale should be subject to a general revision only when it was clear that there had been substantial changes in capacity to pay. In the case of Ukraine, any changes had been for the worse.

(Mr. Batiouk, Ukraine)

9. Further, the Committee on Contributions, although not mandated to do so, had recommended a revision of the scale on a regional basis, only for the former Soviet republics. No legislative authority existed for that recommendation, the effect of which had been to produce a scale that was unjust, as it related to a group of countries that were already in receipt of international assistance.

10. The Committee on Contributions had, moreover, acted as though Ukraine and Belarus were new Member States, whereas Ukraine had been one of the founding Members of the Organization.

11. It seemed that the Committee on Contributions was attempting to bypass the scheme of limits, which prevented excessive variations in assessments between successive scales. In accordance with that principle, the assessment of Ukraine could be raised, if at all, by no more than 10 per cent. It was difficult to understand why the Committee on Contributions had not applied the scheme of limits to Ukraine and Belarus and he suggested that it would be appropriate to seek the view of the Legal Counsel on that matter. The Fifth Committee would recall that, in previous cases involving founding Members which had gained independence, such as India and Pakistan, there had been no change in their assessments. He wondered whether the recommendations of the Committee on Contributions, adopted in disregard of the principle of capacity to pay, met the interests of the Organization. Owing to its critical hard currency situation, Ukraine was already experiencing extreme difficulty in making payments to the regular budget. No one could seriously consider that his Government could pay a 1993 assessment which was 50 per cent higher than its previous assessment. The Organization's financial difficulties would only worsen if the General Assembly accepted the recommendations of the Committee on Contributions.

12. Since capacity to pay was regarded as the main criterion in determining assessments, the Fifth Committee should consider the capacity to pay of a State like Ukraine, which was not integrated into the world economy, whose hard currency assets were frozen in Russian banks, which conducted most of its trade through barter, whose economy had shrunk by almost one fifth over the past year, and which had to pay its share of the foreign debts of the former Soviet Union. It was apparent that the Committee on Contributions had sought to deal with the redistribution of the assessment of the former Soviet Union in such a way that the shares of other States were left untouched. That had had the unfortunate effect of placing a considerable part of the burden on Ukraine and Belarus.

13. Two further issues arose in connection with the reapportionment of the contribution of the former Soviet Union. The total sum of the assessments of the new States - the former Soviet republics - was less than the assessment of the former USSR, although the latter's assessment had been substantially inflated. In that connection, it should be noted that the per capita incomes of several of those States were very low and, when converted into dollars,

(Mr. Batiouk, Ukraine)

should justify relief in accordance with the existing rules. Relief had, however, been apportioned among only three or four of those States.

14. Furthermore, the shares of Ukraine and Belarus within the total assessment of the USSR had historically been less than their shares in the national income of that country. In recognition of its sufferings during the Second World War, Ukraine's share of the Soviet assessment had been set at 11.4 per cent of the total, a percentage which had been consistently used by the Committee on Contributions over the years. No delegation, including that of the Russian Federation, had ever questioned that approach. Indeed, the President of the Russian Federation had indicated, at the forty-sixth session, that his Government assumed complete responsibility for the financial obligations of the former Soviet Union in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The Russian Government had thus not suggested that its contribution should be reduced at the expense of Ukraine or Belarus.

15. It was also unfair that the Committee on Contributions should have assessed the former Soviet republics on the basis of statistical data for 1980-1989, since their national incomes had fallen significantly after that date. The assessments should be based on recent economic performance.

16. In an effort to find a constructive solution, his delegation proposed that the General Assembly, at the current session, should not take any decision to revise the scale of assessments approved at the previous session, in particular with regard to the assessments of Ukraine and Belarus. All that was necessary was to calculate the rates of the new Member States and deduct them from the share of the Soviet Union, in accordance with existing rules. The question of the apportionment of the former USSR assessment could then be considered at an extended forum, with the possible participation of IMF experts and representatives of the former Soviet republics. Another temporary solution might be the exclusion of 0.86 "superfluous" points from the scale, which would reduce the total to 99.14 per cent.

17. Lastly, the Fifth Committee must provide for more active participation by its members in the work of the Committee on Contributions in emergency situations. His Government, which was the thirteenth largest contributor to the regular budget, could not support the recommendations of the Committee on Contributions, which amounted to an infringement of Ukraine's rights as a result of arbitrary interference with the scale of assessments approved by consensus at the forty-sixth session.

18. Mr. GABRIEL (Philippines) commended the Committee on Contributions on having taken a positive step towards the simplification of rate calculations by using uniform exchange rates to calculate the rates of assessment for the new Member States.

19. With regard to debt-adjusted income, he noted that the application of that concept would raise the rates of assessment of certain indebted

(Mr. Gabriel, Philippines)

developing countries. His delegation therefore thought it advisable to study the nature of such increases in order to ascertain whether or not debt adjustment would distort the national income data for those countries and what its effect would be when combined with the overall package of adjustments envisaged.

20. As for the low per capita income allowance formula, his delegation took note of the view that upgrading the gradient from 85 per cent to 100 per cent would make the low per capital income formula more realistic and more representative of the capacity to pay. Since there appeared to be no technical justification for continuing to apply the 85 per cent gradient and since using a 100 per cent gradient would simplify the methodology and benefit countries with very low per capita income, the idea had merit. However, before such a change was made, a more careful study was required of its impact on individual rates of adjustment when combined with the other changes contemplated. Despite its shortcomings, his delegation supported the automatic adjustment of the upper per capita income limit. Until a more accurate method of determining real per capital income could be developed, that approach would provide at least some means of arriving at a more realistic figure for the prevailing world per capita income.

21. With regard to the scheme of limits, his delegation noted the Committee's conclusion that the results of applying all three proposed approaches to the phasing out of the scheme of limits demonstrated that most of the effects of the scheme could be eliminated over two three-year scale periods. However, it fully agreed with the Committee's conclusion that the results of the three different approaches did not necessarily present a realistic picture of the rates of assessment because of numerous other factors which might cause considerable fluctuations in the individual rates of assessment of many countries. In view of the possibility of such variations and the possible adverse effects for several developing countries, the best approach might be to make ad hoc adjustments in the existing scheme of limits for the next two three-year scale periods before eliminating it altogether.

22. His delegation fully understood that, in determining capacity to pay, the Committee's efforts to accommodate the specific concerns of certain Member States were greatly hampered by the unavailability of internationally standardized data. It hoped that the Committee would be able to consider those concerns more closely as such data became more available. It was glad to note the progress made in efforts to refine the methodology of price-adjusted rates of exchange (PARE) and supported the decision to continue working on PARE despite its conceptual imperfections. Until enough data could be accumulated to use purchasing power parities, PARE was still the best way to proceed. It noted with interest the model scale shown in column 5 of the table in annex V to the Committee's report, which was the result of applying floor and ceiling rates to the machine scale of national income weighted by per capita national income. Since some Member States had valid objections to that method, his country believed that further study was needed in order to determine whether its benefits outweighed its shortcomings.

(Mr. Gabriel, Philippines)

23. In closing, he drew the attention of the Fifth Committee to the view expressed by some members of the Committee on Contributions that paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 46/221 B was formulated in such a way as to deprive that Committee of its raison d'être and reduce it to making comments on hypothetical scales of assessments calculated on the basis of criteria pre-determined by the General Assembly (A/47/11, para. 15). His delegation attached great importance to that statement. In its eagerness to perfect the scale of assessments, the Fifth Committee should not prevent the Committee on Contributions from using its vast expertise by placing undue limitations on its work.

AGENDA ITEM 17: APPOINTMENTS TO FILL VACANCIES IN SUBSIDIARY ORGANS AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS (continued)

(e) APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL (A/47/105, A/C.5/47/34)

24. The CHAIRMAN said that, in accordance with article 3, paragraphs 1 and 2, of the statute of the United Nations Administrative Tribunal, the General Assembly had to appoint two persons to fill vacancies that would arise in the membership of the Tribunal on 31 December 1992. The Secretary-General had indicated that Mr. Jerome Ackerman (United States of America) and Mr. Francis R. Spain (Ireland) had been nominated by their respective Governments for reappointment. As the number of candidates corresponded to the number of vacancies, he would take it that the Committee wished to recommend the reappointment of Mr. Ackerman and Mr. Spain for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 1993.

25. It was so decided.

(a) APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY QUESTIONS (A/47/101, A/C.5/47/30) (continued)

26. The CHAIRMAN, drawing the attention of the Committee to rules 155 and 156 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, said that the General Assembly had to appoint six persons to fill vacancies that would arise in the membership of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on 31 December 1992. According to the note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/47/30), nine persons had been nominated by their respective Governments. As the number of candidates from the Group of Asian States corresponded to the number of vacancies for that Group, he would take it that the Committee wished to recommend the appointment of Mr. Tadanori Inomata (Japan), Mr. Ranjit Rae (India) and Mr. Yu Mengjia (China) to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 1993.

27. It was so decided.

28. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that the Government of Belgium had decided to withdraw the name of Mr. Adrien Teirlinck from the ballot. That still, however, left three candidates from the Group of Western and Other States for two vacancies and two candidates from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States for one vacancy. The Committee would therefore hold a secret ballot for each Group.

29. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Penev (Bulgaria), Mr. Elizmaity (Egypt) and Mr. Jadmani (Pakistan) acted as tellers.

Group of Latin American and Caribbean States

30. A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	166
Number of invalid ballots:	19
Number of valid ballots:	147
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	147
Required majority:	74
Number of votes obtained:	
Mr. Jorge José Duhalt (Mexico)	84
Mr. Carlos Casap (Bolivia)	63

31. Mr. Jorge José Duhalt (Mexico) having obtained the required majority, the Committee recommended his appointment to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 1993.

Group of Western European and Other States

32. A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot papers:	169
Number of invalid ballots:	11
Number of valid ballots:	158
Abstentions:	0

Number of members voting: 158

Required majority: 80

Number of votes obtained:

Mr. Gérard Biraud (France) 117

Mr. Wolfgang Münch (Germany) 102

Mr. Russell Merifield (Canada) 87

33. Mr. Gérard Biraud (France) and Mr. Wolfgang Münch (Germany) having obtained the required majority, the Committee recommended their appointment to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 1993.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
19th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 4 November 1992
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 19TH MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. DINU	(Romania)
later:	Ms. ROTHEISER (Vice-Chairman)	(Austria)
later:	Mr. DINU (Chairman)	(Romania)

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AGENDA ITEM 111: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 112: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 103: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)*

AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued)*

AGENDA ITEM 105: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued)*

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* Items considered together.

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/47/SR.19
16 November 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

92-57466 6211S (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 111: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/47/11)

1. Mr. PANTIRU (Republic of Moldova) said that some aspects of the methodology used to establish the scale of assessments were of direct concern to his delegation. At a time of radical political, economic and social change in Europe and other parts of the world, a base statistical period of 10 years could not adequately reflect sudden developments in a country's capacity to pay. A 10-year period was even less relevant in the case of the newly independent States which had emerged following the breakup of other States. Estimates of their national income arrived at through a simple mathematical division of the gross national product of the State from which they had broken away were also of questionable validity. His delegation would therefore welcome a reduction in the base statistical period to five years. Efforts should also be made to determine whether the current methodology was adequate to address the completely new and unprecedented problems confronted by newly independent States or those with economies in transition. His delegation had difficulty in accepting the traditional definition of national income as the basis for evaluating a country's capacity to pay. It recognized the efforts the Committee on Contributions had made to resolve the problem and understood the methodological difficulties of evaluating the economic consequences of accepting waves of refugees. However, a country's capacity to pay was undoubtedly directly influenced by the existence of military conflicts on its territory and it was unfortunate that no adequate methodological solution had yet been found.

2. On the question of exchange rates, it was unanimously accepted that the rouble-dollar exchange rate of naught 0.70 rouble to the dollar that had been used in the former Soviet Union was not realistic. In the Moldovan capital, the current official exchange rate was close to 400 roubles to the dollar and his country could hardly be expected to pay its contribution on the basis of an already unrealistic exchange rate when its real capacity to pay was 400 times less. A methodology which did not take into account the reality could not be trusted.

3. Other delegations he had consulted regarding the recommended rate of assessment for his country (0.15 per cent) had agreed that it was out of proportion to its ability to pay. The same applied to the other newly independent former Soviet republics. While the recommendations might be correct from a strictly methodological point of view, the methodology itself was inadequate and discriminatory.

4. In conclusion, he said that the rate of assessment recommended for the Republic of Moldova was unacceptable. The current methodology was an obstacle to the process of negotiation and cooperation among States and should be radically amended so that the Committee on Contributions, at its 1993 session,

(Mr. Pantiru, Republic of Moldova)

would be able to recommend new and equitable rates for 1994. His delegation accordingly reserved its position regarding a decision on the matter by the Fifth Committee. It was aware of the importance of reaching a consensus and would display the same flexibility as other delegations, but felt that the recommendations for many new Member States, as well as for some others, constituted an obstacle to consensus.

5. Mr. MIHAI (Romania) said that, while his delegation approved in general of the comments, analysis and recommendations contained in the report of the Committee on Contributions (A/47/11), it felt that the recommendations on possible changes in the current methodology, requested by the General Assembly in resolution 46/221 B, were inadequate. The Committee on Contributions had, of course, been entrusted with a daunting task, given the unprecedented situation in which rates had to be recommended for States which had emerged following the breakup of former States.

6. The changes taking place in the world, especially in Europe, warranted a reduction in the 10-year statistical base period, and the Fifth Committee should consider reverting to a five-year period. The concept of debt-adjusted income should be studied further, since it could lead to a better reflection of the capacity to pay of Member States, which was the fundamental criterion for determining the scale of assessments. The Committee on Contributions was to be commended on its substantive analysis of the phasing out of the scheme of limits and he stressed his delegation's flexibility regarding any substantive approach to that matter.

7. With regard to possible improvements in the current methodology for establishing the scale of assessments, he felt that further emphasis should be placed on adjustments to national and per capita income and the application of price-adjusted rates of exchange (PARE). It was to be hoped that the current efforts of the Statistical Division to improve its data base would provide the Committee with more reliable figures.

8. On the question of the assessment of new Member States, his delegation agreed with the view expressed by the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions that it had had to work within constraints that made insufficient reflection of the current circumstances inevitable, but shared the concerns expressed in the Fifth Committee by a number of delegations, including some representing newly independent States, regarding the inappropriateness of the scale of assessments recommended. He endorsed the comments of the representative of the Republic of Moldova regarding the relevance of the statistical data for the 10-year base period and the exchange rate used by the Committee and he hoped that the Fifth Committee would take those arguments into consideration. He commended the commitment of the Committee on Contributions to the principle of equal treatment, which should benefit all new Member States and he hoped that those principles, as well as the rule of consensus, would guide the Fifth Committee in its debates and negotiations.

AGENDA ITEM 112: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/46/326 and Add.1; A/47/140 and Add.1, A/47/168 and Add.1 and A/47/416; A/C.5/46/2, A/C.5/46/7, A/C.5/46/9, A/C.5/46/13 and A/C.5/46/16; A/C.5/47/5, A/C.5/47/6, A/C.5/47/9, A/C.5/47/14 and A/C.5/47/20)

9. Mrs. SHEAROUSE (United States of America) said that her delegation strongly supported the Secretary-General's efforts to restructure the Secretariat, since a streamlined Organization with well-defined personnel policies and procedures was important if the United Nations was to meet the new challenges. Capable human resources were the Organization's greatest strength and the staff were to be commended for their response to the ever-increasing demands placed on the United Nations, despite the uncertainties caused by the restructuring exercise.

10. Her delegation was deeply concerned over the increasing violations of the civil and human rights of staff members, in particular over the number of violent deaths reported in 1992, as well as the continued high number of cases of arrest, detention and abduction. It was the responsibility of all Member States to ensure the security and protection of United Nations personnel; they must continue to support the Secretary-General's efforts to obtain the release of all United Nations staff currently reported missing or detained without due process, and to urge the cooperation of all responsible authorities towards that end.

11. Her delegation continued to be concerned over the lack of immediate access to detained staff and of explanation for their arrest or detention. It wholeheartedly supported the proposals put forward by the inter-agency meeting on security measures held in May 1992 and had voiced strong support for the proposals put forward by the ad hoc inter-agency group meeting in June 1991, particularly with respect to the right of detained staff to adequate medical care and the need to maintain a legal link with detained or arrested staff members through the renewal of their contracts. She would like to know whether those proposals had been followed up and, if not, why not. She also felt that greater attention should be paid to the families of missing or detained staff members and that previously detained staff members should be given facilities for rehabilitation and reintegration into the United Nations community.

12. On the question of career development and related issues such as training, performance evaluation, job classification, mobility and promotion, her delegation welcomed the positive thinking on many of those issues evident in the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/47/6). While she realized that it took time to institute a sound career development system, she pointed out that it had been 14 years since the intention to establish such a system had been announced. Abuse of job classification seemed to be the primary means currently used to "develop" careers.

13. With regard to human resources planning, it was disconcerting to note that the Organization had not considered its human resources requirements and

(Mrs. Shearouse, United States)

their optimum use before undertaking the restructuring exercise. It was essential to have a plan in place for forecasting staffing needs. In connection with recruitment, reference was made to a serious problem of retention although no solid evidence had been provided. Her delegation would like information on the vacancy rates for Professional and General Service staff prior to the suspension of external recruitment and on the number of staff who had left the Organization for higher-paying but comparable positions in the public or private sector.

14. With regard to the staff mobility system, her delegation agreed that greater attention must be paid to the development of a systematic rotation and mobility scheme within the career development plan, given the increased role of the Secretariat in humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping missions. It was important, however, to ensure that the benefits of such a system outweighed the costs involved. In that connection, she asked what were the anticipated benefits of establishing a mobility scheme for the language occupational group and whether they were significant enough to warrant the expenditure required.

15. Staff development and training were critical to any career development plan and greater emphasis must be placed on developing the capacity of the staff to respond to the Organization's new challenges and directions. Her delegation agreed that a strengthened training programme was essential if the Organization was to maintain its capacity to deal with new challenges. In addition, the development of effective managerial skills should be a requirement for career advancement. She wondered however, whether newly recruited entry-level staff should need training.

16. The principle of the system of job classification, or the evaluation of posts through the application of uniform criteria or standards, was equal pay for work of equal difficulty and responsibility. Her delegation objected to the proposal, in paragraph 36 of the report, that Professional posts at the P-2 to P-4 levels should be budgeted at a single level in the same manner as G-1 to G-6 posts. It believed that such a reform would lead to grade creep and undermine the integrity of the classification system. It had read with interest the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) on the advantages and disadvantages of the post classification system (A/47/168) and believed that the recommendations therein merited careful consideration.

17. Her delegation agreed that performance evaluation was an important component of a career development system. The lack of sound performance evaluation, which could indicate the potential of staff members to assume higher responsibilities, hindered career development. The President of the Federation of International Civil Servants Associations (FICSA), in an open letter to the Secretary-General which had recently appeared in The New York Times, had called for the elimination of "dead wood" from the United Nations, a position with which her delegation wholeheartedly agreed.

(Mrs. Shearouse, United States)

18. On the question of competitive examinations, her delegation would like to make a formal proposal that the G-to-P examination should be given only every other year and that a roster should be maintained from which successful candidates could be recruited. That would eliminate duplication and the waste of limited resources and provide a more stable career ladder for General Service staff. With regard to national competitive examinations at the P-3 level, her delegation, which had been in favour of them, had some concern about continuing them during the restructuring period. It hoped, first, that the examination process was not adversely affecting the prospects of staff members eligible for promotion from the P-2 to the P-3 level, and second, that an adequate number of posts remained available for successful candidates to justify the expense of using the national competitive examination process for recruitment at the P-3 level. According to the report on competitive examinations at the P-3 level (A/C.5/47/5) of the 92 candidates who had taken the examinations in 1991, only 4 had been offered appointments. Her delegation would like information on the cost-effectiveness of the examinations. While it was not in favour of abandoning such examinations, but rather of limiting their number, it believed that it would be less costly to use recruitment missions consisting of representatives of the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) and the substantive offices concerned to identify qualified candidates.

19. According to the report on the representation of women in the Secretariat (A/47/508), women currently constituted 30.6 per cent of the staff in posts subject to geographical distribution. Although that reflected a slight overall increase, her delegation remained concerned that men continued to be recruited and promoted at a higher rate than women. At the more senior levels, women were grossly underrepresented. Her delegation endorsed the Secretary-General's measures aimed at improving the representation of women in the Secretariat and urged Member States to support those efforts by nominating more women candidates and encouraging women to apply for vacant posts. Her delegation welcomed the guidelines and procedures that had been developed to deal with the issue of sexual harassment. It only regretted that the process had taken so long.

20. With regard to the Secretary-General's report on the composition of the Secretariat (A/47/416), particularly the different options proposed for revising the desirable ranges for geographical distribution of Professional staff presented in document A/C.5/46/2, her delegation believed that no changes should be introduced until the current system, which had been in effect only since 1 January 1988, had been given time to work. Given the significant number of new Member States and the freeze on external recruitment, four years was not enough time to allow the system to make an impact. Another change in the formula could result in renewed instability.

21. Referring to the Secretary-General's statement regarding restrictions on official and private travel of officials of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and related organizations (A/C.5/47/14, paras. 14-21),

(Mrs. Shearouse, United States)

she said that the provisions governing the private travel of staff members of certain nationalities within the United States did not restrict the official travel of international civil servants and did not in any way impede their work. The United States was committed to continuing to honour its obligations as the host country and would continue to ensure freedom of travel for staff members on official business. In that regard, there was no contradiction between its obligations as the host country and its inherent right to take the necessary steps to safeguard its national security. Her delegation believed that the appropriate context for the discussion of the matter was the report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country and it therefore recommended that the matter should be considered only under that item.

22. Her delegation's position on the report on the administration of justice in the Secretariat, secondment from government service and amendments to the staff rules which had been submitted at the previous session (A/C.5/46/7, A/C.5/46/9 and A/C.5/46/13) remained unchanged.

23. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the twelve States members of the European Community, said that they attached importance to an independent Secretariat and a competent staff. In view of the high expectations placed upon the Organization, it was more essential than ever to manage human resources efficiently.

24. The Twelve endorsed the comments of the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization concerning the dedication and versatility of United Nations staff members, who had had to respond to many unfamiliar tasks, often in conditions of hardship and danger.

25. They also supported the restructuring exercise, without which the renaissance of the Organization could not take place. The successful implementation of the changes resulting from restructuring would require high levels of human-resource management skills and the active support of staff at all levels. In that connection, he recalled Article 97 of the Charter, which provided that the Secretary-General was the chief administrative officer, and Article 101, which provided that he should appoint the staff. The General Assembly had repeatedly reaffirmed its support for those Charter functions.

26. The Twelve welcomed the reassurance in the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/47/416) that the principles governing the recruitment and employment of staff derived from Article 101 of the Charter, namely, the importance of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, and of achieving as wide a geographical basis as possible in recruitment. Articles 7 and 8, which established the Secretariat as a principal organ and provided for the equality of men and women, must also govern the Organization's personnel policy. As noted by the Secretary-General at the forty-sixth session, the vision of the Charter remained as valid as ever.

(Mr. Stitt, United Kingdom)

27. It was legitimate to expect the highest standard of personnel management. A rigorous recruitment process, based on objective criteria, was essential, and, in that connection, he noted the advantages of competitive examinations. The European Community favoured competitive examinations as the normal method of recruitment at the P-1 and P-2 levels, and efforts should continue to introduce the system at the P-3 level, provided that the promotion prospects of staff members at lower Professional levels were not jeopardized. Attention must also be paid to cost-effectiveness in recruitment procedures, taking into account the relationship between the number of applicants, of successful candidates and of available posts. The European Community believed that all posts, both fixed-term and permanent, should be open to nationals of all Member States, without discrimination as to gender.

28. The system of desirable ranges reflected the importance of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible. He saw no reason to change the current methodology, which had been established by consensus at the forty-second session.

29. The Twelve welcomed the progress made in appointing and promoting women, particularly the significant increase in the number of women at the D-1 level. The status of women in the Secretariat should be promoted through equality of opportunity for all candidates, with due regard for the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. Member States should put forward qualified women candidates for posts and encourage women to apply for the competitive examinations.

30. With regard to the secretarial occupation, he noted that there had been an increase in the number of higher-level posts, particularly at the G-5 level, following a restructuring review. He would welcome further information on the review, together with details of the criteria for filling the increased number of higher-level posts and the impact on staff costs. He noted that the Secretary-General had issued guidelines on the question of sexual harassment.

31. The Twelve recognized the importance of providing staff with opportunities to upgrade their skills. They had earlier drawn attention to the need to evaluate the usefulness of the Organization's training programmes, and it was disappointing that the Secretary-General's report on the training programme in the Secretariat (A/C.5/47/9) was negative about the possibilities of evaluating training activities. The Twelve hoped that guidelines and evaluation tools would be developed to make evaluation a component of every training activity. He noted the references both in the report and in the statement made by the former Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management to the importance of good writing skills for a career in the international civil service.

32. The Twelve shared the concern of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management regarding the cumbersome personnel system in the Organization. There was a need for meaningful performance evaluation to

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assess staff performance and ensure the accountability of managers. While that was a matter for the Secretary-General as chief administrative officer, it was important for the confidence of the staff and of Member States to develop credible procedures. The Organization would benefit from reliance on a core international civil service recruited at the entry level with satisfactory career prospects. Excessive recourse to external recruitment at the senior levels should be avoided. A training programme could be helpful in that regard, but training by itself would not resolve the problem of limited career prospects, as long as the average age and grade of new recruits remained high.

33. The Twelve had previously expressed concern over the lack of a realistic mobility system, since mobility, both between functions and between Headquarters and the field, should be one of the criteria governing the planning of careers and promotions. Such a system would also facilitate staff redeployment and improve flexibility and efficiency.

34. The Twelve shared the Secretary-General's concern at the ever-increasing numbers of upward reclassifications of jobs. A review, in consultation with the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), would be useful. The proposal that Professional posts at levels P-2 to P-4 should be budgeted at a single level did not appear to be justified in terms of the application of the ICSC master standard, nor was it clear that it would facilitate the task of programme managers or of the Fifth Committee in considering the proposed programme budget.

35. The system of administration of justice in the Secretariat was elaborate and expensive, and recourse to it was increasing. Managers must avoid actions which might result in adverse rulings and monetary awards and staff should be encouraged not to pursue cases that were without merit.

36. A good personnel policy required appropriate financial reward for work done. A sound career development plan, with recognition through promotion, should also serve as an incentive. The Twelve would follow with particular attention the pilot project for the definition of a career development plan.

37. Lastly, at the forty-sixth session, the European Community had drawn attention to the question of spouse employment, and had expressed a desire to discuss the issue at the current session. He would welcome information regarding the policy on that matter.

38. Mr. O'BRIEN (New Zealand), speaking on behalf of the delegations of Australia and Canada in addition to his own, said that he welcomed the recognition in the Secretary-General's report on career development (A/C.5/47/6) that people were the most important element in the Organization's effectiveness and that personnel policies should facilitate the development of staff members' potential. The three delegations fully supported a career development programme that would balance the needs of the Organization and the

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

needs of the staff. Such a balance should apply to the various elements of an integrated career development system - recruitment, promotion, performance evaluation, rotation, secondment and training - if the Organization was to fulfil its mandates and if the staff were to be productive while enjoying satisfying careers.

39. Career development issues could not be considered in isolation from each other and needed to be related to a strategic plan for the Organization as a whole. The panel of Australian and French experts which had recently reported on a career development system for the United Nations had commented on the lack of such a plan. The report should be made widely available.

40. The growing use of competitive examinations was welcome, as was the new emphasis on career development planning, although more attention should be paid to the General Service staff. Appointments at all levels should be based on merit, and recruitment procedures should be fair, consistent and transparent; competitive examinations were a means to those ends.

41. He noted the intention to limit external recruitment at senior levels to a minimum. It was essential to evaluate the need for a post before filling it each time it became vacant. At the same time, the desire to improve career advancement prospects for existing staff by not appointing new staff over their heads was laudable. Any curtailment of recruitment at senior levels should, however, take into account the fact that every organization needed a regular transfusion of new blood and that severe restrictions on recruitment would impede progress towards the attainment of the numerical targets for women in senior positions.

42. Promotion within the Organization should, like recruitment, be based on merit, and be fair, consistent and transparent. The panel of experts had noted that the current performance evaluation system was meaningless, and had made interesting suggestions for improvements that would enable the evaluation process to contribute to career development. It was, of course, important to ensure that any new system represented an improvement.

43. The three delegations commended the Secretariat on the progress made in establishing a new focus on training for United Nations staff. The priorities identified by the Secretary-General - leadership, skills related to peacemaking, peace-keeping and peace-building, communication skills, and technological and professional skills - were valid. Planning and evaluation skills were also important. Training must be properly funded, and expenditure on training should not be seen as a cost to the Organization but as an investment in its most valuable resource, the staff. Training must be closely tied to the work of the Organization as well as to the career development needs of staff, and effective machinery must be set up to evaluate its effectiveness. In that connection, he would welcome information on the evaluation methods used in subjects other than languages.

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

44. Secondment in and out of the Organization could introduce new skills, as well as develop the careers of staff members. The United Nations should not limit its opportunities for such enrichment and should not seek to maintain the fiction that staff on secondment from outside agencies relinquished all connection with their usual employer, with whom their long-term career prospects lay. To do so was to create impossible conditions for prospective employees whose expertise would be invaluable, and it might also deprive United Nations staff of a chance to broaden their experience. There was a need for a procedure that would facilitate secondments both in and out of the Organization, with due regard to Article 100 of the Charter.

45. The safety of United Nations personnel was a matter of deep concern. Member States shared the concerns expressed by the Secretary-General and were engaged in seeking solutions. The balance of civilian to military personnel in potentially dangerous missions needed to be reassessed and more training should be provided to prepare personnel for difficult environments.

46. With regard to the question of the responsibility of the United Nations and its employees towards each other, he welcomed the Secretary-General's initiatives aimed at strengthening the code of ethics for staff and the efforts to expedite the administration of justice within the Secretariat. Adequate resources should be provided for the various bodies involved in hearing staff grievances. It was disappointing, however, that the Secretary-General's report on the administration of justice (A/C.5/46/7) failed to mention the issue of sexual harassment, which was a particularly distressing phenomenon that affected men as well as women. It was, however, reassuring to learn that new procedures for dealing with sexual harassment had just been issued. Complaints should be thoroughly investigated.

47. The expert panel's report on career development suggested that the management practices of the United Nations lagged behind those of certain national civil services. As the report had noted, given the Organization's position as a role model in various areas of international reform, it should give priority to putting its own house in order.

48. Ms. Rotheiser (Austria), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

49. Mr. SUCHMAN (Czechoslovakia) said that it was impossible to imagine the development of an action-ready, adaptable Organization if staff members remained tied to inflexible habits inherited from their predecessors. His delegation fully supported the plans for the reform of the entire personnel management system, particularly with regard to staff training and performance evaluation. If, however, some employees were unable or unwilling to improve their performance, categorical measures should be taken.

(Mr. Suchman, Czechoslovakia)

50. Referring to the report on respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and related organizations (A/C.5/47/14), he said he hoped that the discussion of the issue would lead to an improvement in the working conditions of such officials.

51. With regard to the Secretary-General's report on competitive examinations at the P-3 level (A/C.5/47/5), he said that his delegation fully supported the organization of national examinations for those posts, but felt that successful candidates should be appointed more quickly.

52. Czechoslovakia had no objection to United Nations service being a life-long career for most members of the Secretariat. Greater use should, however, be made of fixed-term contracts, which provided a good mechanism for filling posts in connection with missions and new or one-time tasks and for hiring personnel on a probationary basis. Because secondment served some of the same purposes, his country favoured that practice. The secretariats of the organizations of the United Nations system should, however, abide by the rules governing secondment and not take decisions regarding seconded employees without the approval of the seconding State.

53. Mr. KARBUCZKY (Hungary) said that the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/47/416) contained few surprises and reiterated his delegation's support for the biennialization of the agenda item on personnel questions.

54. Although Hungary was represented at the mid-point of its desirable range, the highest post occupied by a Hungarian was at the P-4 level despite the numerous qualified candidates presented for higher level posts. He was pleased to note the improvement in the overall representation of developing countries in posts subject to geographical distribution. However, with respect to the practice of grouping Member States by geographical region, he reiterated the opinion of his delegation that, since recruitment for geographic posts was based solely on two criteria - the qualifications of the candidate and the representation of his country - there was no reason to compile statistics by regional groupings. Moreover, while Hungary accepted the fact that the two major factors in determining desirable ranges for staff in posts in the Professional category and above were the number of Member States and their assessed contributions, it was opposed to any drastic change in the current ratio between them. Lastly, given the high number of unrepresented countries as a result of the recent increase in membership, steps should be taken to remedy that situation, despite the current recruitment freeze.

55. With regard to training and career development, the question of whether to train the present staff or to hire fully qualified new staff must be decided collectively on the basis of both cost-effectiveness and the Organization's responsibility to its staff, bearing in mind that 75 per cent of the staff averaged 20 years service and that there were certain spheres of

(Mr. Karbuczky, Hungary)

activity, such as peace-keeping and human rights, in which the United Nations had its own training needs. In the light of the foregoing, his delegation agreed with the priority areas designated in the report on the training programme in the Secretariat (A/C.5/47/9), with the addition of the training of human rights monitors and electoral officials, as proposed by the Secretary-General in his Agenda for Peace (A/47/277).

56. As for the integrated career development system discussed in the Secretary-General's report on career development at the United Nations (A/C.5/47/6), human resources planning must be implemented as soon as the Secretariat could achieve relative structural stability. A skills inventory would be required to coordinate staff mobility and training under the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS). Staff mobility would play an important role in the integrated system, and he hoped that the planned pilot project in that area would prove useful. Recruitment, which raised the issues of the competitiveness of United Nations salaries and career advancement for staff, would be a factor in any integrated system.

57. With regard to the proposed changes in job classification, his delegation could in principle support the idea of budgeting for posts at the P-2 to P-4 levels as a group. It would, however, like to know who would then be responsible for classifying the posts within the group and how the Secretariat would prevent the new system from being regarded as a promotion vehicle like the old system. It also wondered how posts at the D-1 and higher levels would be classified, what criteria would be used to classify posts filled through political appointments, what the qualitative differences would be between career and political appointment posts, and whether any additional job classification levels were foreseen.

58. Performance evaluation, promotion and other motivators were of critical importance in ensuring the commitment and dedication of the staff. The current recruitment freeze could not remain in place for long without impairing the functioning of the Organization. The holding of national competitive examinations at the P-3 level, which Hungary fully supported, would be made easier if the freeze were lifted, and the placement of successful candidates would obviously be speeded up. His delegation noted with satisfaction the report of the Secretary-General concerning those examinations (A/C.5/47/5).

59. In closing, he wished to express the gratitude of his Government for the understanding and technical advice provided by the Secretariat in solving the problem of taxation of its nationals who were locally recruited at the branch office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) at Budapest.

60. Mr. KHAN (Bangladesh) expressed his country's deep appreciation for the work done by United Nations staff members in difficult and trying circumstances. He commended the Secretary-General for his efforts to maintain a balance between the principle of efficiency, competence and integrity and that of equitable geographical representation, especially in the light of the continuing financial crisis of the Organization. However, the report on the composition of the Secretariat (A/47/416) showed mixed results, with the number of underrepresented Member States falling from 24 to 21 and the number of unrepresented States rising from 9 to 29 during the period 30 June 1991 and 30 June 1992. Although the increase in the number of unrepresented States was mainly due to the admission of 19 new Members, Bangladesh believed that the Secretariat should strive harder to improve the representation of Member States.

61. It was impossible to overemphasize the importance of the system of desirable ranges for the United Nations as an international organization. That system was based on three factors: membership, contributions and population and his delegation regretted that the General Assembly had not given due consideration at its forty-fifth session to the requirement of raising the percentage weight of the population factor, as called for in resolution 42/220 III. He hoped that the weighting of that factor would be restored to its 1987 level of 7.25 per cent.

62. The increase in the proportion of women in posts subject to geographical distribution, including the significant improvement at the D-1 level, was a positive sign. His delegation had noted with interest the findings of the consultant who had been provided to identify obstacles to women in the Secretariat, as well as the steps that had been taken to remove such obstacles through the action programme, particularly with regard to the coordination of recruitment, placement and promotion and the accountability of managers. It thought, however, that greater attention should be paid to the participation of women at the senior level and to the recruitment of women from developing countries.

63. His delegation looked forward to the implementation of an integrated concept of career development based on the pilot project. Undue limitations should not, however, be imposed on external recruitment at the P-4 to D-2 levels, since fresh talent at all levels was vital to the dynamism of the Organization. It welcomed efforts to improve performance evaluation and staff training, which would help to prepare the Organization to deal with new challenges and to meet the expectations of Member States.

64. Lastly, it was concerned by the comments of the former Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, to the effect that the United Nations might no longer be in a position to guarantee minimum standards of safety and security for its staff. It hoped that all Member States would make every effort to ensure the safety and security of United Nations staff so that they could carry out their work. More should also be done to help the families of those who had been abducted, arrested, injured or killed.

65. Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria) said that, with the increase in the workload of the staff of the Organization, it was essential to improve motivation and morale by providing the proper conditions of service. A satisfactory career development system was vital, and the Secretary-General was to be commended on his efforts to modernize and improve that system. In his delegation's view, the career development plan should include an effective system of promotion at all levels, create incentives for mobility and provide various opportunities for job training throughout a staff member's career. Implementation of such a system would, of course, require adequate funding.

66. With respect to the overall representation of women in posts subject to geographical distribution, his delegation was pleased to note that the percentage had now risen to 30.6. However, the situation remained unsatisfactory at the D-1 level and above, where the percentage stood at only 10.39. More women should be identified for promotion above the P-4 level. He was convinced that many excellent women candidates were available for recruitment, since they did as well as men in the competitive examinations, and he encouraged the Secretary-General to continue his efforts. Member States shared in the responsibility for improving the representation of women in the Secretariat; Austria would do its best to present more women candidates, and he urged other countries to do the same.

67. With regard to the report on the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and related organizations (A/C.5/47/14), it was imperative to ensure the security and safety of such officials so that they could carry out their work. As a host country, Austria fully respected all such privileges and immunities.

68. Mr. AYEWAH (Nigeria) said that, as peace-keeping operations increased in scope and character to meet the fresh challenges and heavier responsibilities facing the United Nations following the end of the cold war, greater resources would be required for those operations and growing numbers of staff would be called upon to participate in them under difficult conditions. He wholeheartedly agreed with the former Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management that Member States must do their utmost to protect staff members and their families and continue their efforts to secure the release of staff detained or imprisoned in violation of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. He deeply regretted that several United Nations staff members had lost their lives during recent months.

69. He welcomed the decrease in the number of underrepresented Member States from 24 in June 1991 to 21 in June 1992, but was concerned that the number of unrepresented Member States had increased from 9 to 29 during the same period, a development attributed to the freeze in recruitment and the admission of 13 new Member States. That anomaly could and should be rectified in order to improve the geographical distribution of posts.

70. He welcomed the efforts to improve the status of women in the Secretariat, particularly the success in achieving the 30 per cent target for

(Mr. Ayewah, Nigeria)

women's representation. He also welcomed the fact that women now occupied 30.6 per cent of the posts subject to geographical distribution. That level was above the 30 per cent target set by the General Assembly for 1990 but was still short of the 35 per cent target for 1995, which he hoped the Secretariat would do its utmost to achieve. He was pleased to note that quite a number of women were occupying high-level posts. He regretted, however, that only 12 of the 50 appointments made between July 1991 and June 1992 were from developing countries. The Secretariat should rectify that situation by recruiting qualified women from developing countries, particularly in Africa.

71. At the forty-sixth session, his delegation had suggested that the population weighting factor should be increased from the current 5 per cent to 7.2 per cent. It was important to agree on an equitable range once and for all during the current session.

72. Finally, he deplored the fact that a competitive examination to recruit staff at the P-2 level had been held in only one country in Africa, while no examination for the P-3 level had been held at all. Efforts should be made to organize more examinations in Africa in order to recruit more personnel from that region.

73. Mr. ETEFFA (Ethiopia), commenting on the report of the Secretary-General concerning the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations (A/C.5/47/14), which contained references to the safety and security of staff members of the United Nations and other international organizations in various countries including his own, said that Ethiopia, which was host to major international and regional organizations, had always striven to maintain the security of their staff, with the result that no major problems had been experienced during the past three decades. Although some security problems had occurred following the downfall of the former Government as a result of the demobilization of the former army and police forces, the security situation had been fully normalized now that the Transitional Government had established a new police force and set up peace and stability committees.

74. With regard to the killing of Mr. Lourenco Mutaca, a UNHCR official from Mozambique, referred to in paragraph 7 of the report, he said that four suspects had been apprehended and that the Government was doing everything in its power to bring those responsible to justice. He also wished to apologize wholeheartedly for an incident in which an official had been fired upon and detained for failing to stop after inadvertently violating traffic regulations. He stressed that the incidents in question, and other similar episodes, had occurred immediately after the change of government. The Transitional Government had now brought the security situation under control both in the capital and in rural areas and was doing its utmost to create conducive working conditions for international and regional organizations in Addis Ababa. Indeed, an agreement had been reached between the Transitional Government and officials of the Economic Commission for Africa that they would work together very closely in all areas of mutual concern, including the security of United Nations personnel.

75. Mr. MAQTARI (Yemen) expressed confidence that the appointment of a new head of the Office of Human Resources Management would be far more useful, in terms of improving the performance of the staff and indirectly in alleviating the financial crisis, than the services of an outside consultant. It should also help to resolve the issue of underrepresented States, of which his country was one, whose repeated efforts to place their nationals in vacancies in the United Nations system had repeatedly been thwarted without justification. Those countries had been striving to ensure full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution in all posts and expected to see that principle properly applied, in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 45/239 A. Meanwhile, his delegation wished to know the legal justification for direct appointments by the Secretary-General for at least one year to posts in the Professional category and above, as mentioned in paragraph 10 of document A/47/416.

76. While agreeing with the Secretary-General that competitive examinations helped to attract qualified staff, his delegation hoped that such examinations would not impede recruitment of staff from underrepresented States, expressed concern at the delay in transmitting application forms for posts to such States and hoped that forms would be sent promptly in the future. It was also essential to ensure equal treatment of the six official languages, including their use for both written and oral tests and in the assignment of staff to supervise examinations. While applauding the Secretariat's plans to enhance the linguistic and communication skills of staff, his delegation also requested the establishment of a communications unit to cover skills such as drafting, meetings servicing, oral presentations and communications with the media in all six official languages without distinction.

77. Mr. TAMMAR (Saudi Arabia) said that the new tasks entrusted to the United Nations system over the past five years, particularly in the areas of peace-keeping and peacemaking, made it necessary to expand responsibilities in a situation of limited resources, to engage in a broad process of restructuring and to make the Organization more effective while giving the staff a more active role in planning and developing their careers through an integrated human resources management system.

78. The assignment of new tasks to the Organization was further complicated by the need for some staff members to work in conditions of extreme insecurity. His delegation, which was deeply concerned by the loss of life, detention and abduction of staff referred to in document A/C.5/47/14, reiterated its respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and related organizations and urged the Administrative Committee on Coordination to take urgent measures to ensure the security of all staff.

79. Noting the summary of the main findings of the review requested under paragraph 26 of General Assembly resolution 46/190 (A/47/336), his delegation hoped that account would be taken of the following recommendations. Exact requirements for meetings in terms of interpretation and documentation should

(Mr. Tammar, Saudi Arabia)

be carefully planned in advance. The Meetings Servicing Unit should be promptly informed of any changes in requirements, and electronic means should be used to schedule the services of interpreters and other staff required for meetings. There should be further cross-exchange of language staff. Meetings should be spread evenly throughout the year and among different United Nations offices. Use should continue to be made of word-processing and electronic-publishing technologies, without incurring additional costs. Computers should be made available to translators at Headquarters in order to facilitate the checking of terminology. The costs and benefits of videoconferencing should be analysed, as an alternative to sending interpreters to service meetings abroad. Finally, in the context of the broader review of the structure of the Secretariat, his delegation hoped that a detailed study would be undertaken of developments in Arabic translation, including an assessment of performance and productivity since 1975 and of the problems preventing an improvement in standards of translation and interpretation into Arabic.

80. In view of the need for a constant improvement in the skills and qualification of the Organization's staff, his delegation regretted the extremely low level of spending on staff training by comparison with other organizations of the United Nations system and recommended that the current level of spending on staff training programmes should be increased. The efforts of the Office of Human Resources Management to establish long-term programmes should be supported and due attention should be given to language training. The use of Arabic, as one of the six official languages of the Organization, was of particular significance in that regard. His delegation also believed that the time had come to open the channels of communication between management and staff in order to restore trust and transparency with regard to career prospects in the context of long-term restructuring.

81. Given the paramount consideration in the employment of the staff expressed in Article 101 of the Charter, it was unfortunate that so many Member States should remain unrepresented or underrepresented. His delegation called for the provisions of paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 45/239 A to be extended to all posts subject to geographical distribution. With regard to supplementary payments, his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's statement that such practices were entirely unacceptable. In conclusion, his delegation believed that restructuring must be continued in order to ensure the best possible use of the Organization's resources wherever they were most needed.

82. Mr. Dinu (Romania) resumed the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 103: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/46/327 and Corr.1 and Add.1; A/C.5/47/16; A/C.5/46/CRP.1)

AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued) (A/47/7/Add.1, A/C.5/47/2 and Corr.1, and A/C.5/47/7)

AGENDA ITEM 105: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued) (A/47/3, A/47/6, A/47/16 (Part I) and (Part II) and Add.1, A/47/32, A/47/116, A/47/159 and Add.1, A/47/407 (E/1992/11 and Add.1 and 2) and A/47/408 (E/1991/143))

83. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) said that the revised estimates were highly relevant to the effective administrative functioning of the United Nations. In its resolution 46/232, the General Assembly had asked the Secretary-General to report on the financial implications and the programmatic impact of organizational changes, but the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/47/2) dealt solely with the financial aspects of restructuring and his delegation shared the concerns expressed by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) concerning the lack of information on the programmatic aspects of the restructuring process.

84. He noted the Secretary-General's assurances that the programme of activities adopted by the General Assembly in the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 had not been directly affected by the restructuring and supported the goal of the process, which was to consolidate and streamline the Organization's activities into well-defined functional categories so as to ensure effective implementation of the objectives of the Charter and the mandates entrusted to the policy-making organs.

85. He noted that the first phase of restructuring involved the reorganization of various departments, the abolition of 18 high-level posts, the creation of 5 new high-level posts and savings of approximately $4.4 million. He trusted that equitable geographical distribution would be maintained with regard to high-level posts and that the implementation of mandated activities would not be adversely affected.

86. With regard to the treatment of vacancies, the report stressed that current mechanisms made it difficult to respond rapidly to changing needs and that greater flexibility was needed in the management of staff resources. With that in view, the Secretary-General had proposed the establishment of an internal procedure through which the continuing relevance and rational use of posts that became vacant during the biennium would be examined. His delegation believed that the Secretary-General should be given the necessary flexibility within the framework of the rules governing the transfer of resources between sections of the budget.

(Mr. Zahid, Morocco)

87. Although the Organization needed to adapt to the new challenges posed by a changing world, that should not be done at the expense of mandated activities, particularly in the priority areas already endorsed by the General Assembly in the medium-term plan and in the programme budget for 1992-1993.

88. Numerous revisions had been proposed to the medium-term plan to take account of the mandates deriving from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the first phase of the restructuring process. In paragraph 16 of its report (A/47/16, part II), CPC recommended approval of those revisions on the understanding that further modifications would be made to the relevant programmes to take into account any follow-up decisions regarding those mandates which the General Assembly might take. His delegation endorsed that recommendation and would strive to secure agreement on the revisions submitted for consideration to the General Assembly by CPC. He also endorsed the conclusions contained in paragraphs 20, 21 and 22 of the report concerning the need to maintain the prominent place of the medium-term plan by finding ways to improve the consideration of the plan, notably by developing a prototype of a possible new format. He hoped that the seminar proposed by CPC would assist the Secretariat in drafting a proposal to that end.

89. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria) said that she welcomed the Secretary-General's initiative to reform and restructure the United Nations so as to enhance efficiency and coordination by streamlining the Secretariat and avoiding duplication of activities. Although she recognized the prerogative of the Secretary-General as chief administrative officer in accordance with Article 97 of the Charter, she shared the concern expressed by the Advisory Committee as to the practical difficulties which might result if the budget structure failed to correspond to the organizational structure of the Secretariat.

90. While she welcomed the reduction in high-level posts - which would create clear lines of responsibility - and the resulting budget savings of $4.4 million, she felt that restructuring should not be an end in itself but should enhance the Organization's ability to implement the mandates entrusted to it by Member States. In order to evaluate fully the effects of restructuring, detailed information on programme delivery was needed and her delegation looked forward to receiving that information before taking a final position on the revised estimates. Extensive consultations were also needed between Member States and the Secretary-General on the reform process recommended by CPC.

91. With regard to the treatment of vacancies, she regretted the absence of a clear section-by-section overview showing which posts were vacant or temporarily filled, and supported the Advisory Committee's request for additional information on that question.

(Ms. Rotheiser, Austria)

92. She welcomed the Secretary-General's intention to apply financial regulation 4.5 and rule 104.4 to a greater extent in seeking increased flexibility in the management of vacant posts, but would like further information on the intent and scope of the proposal, as well as the proposed criteria to be followed. Greater flexibility without control might jeopardize the priorities set by the General Assembly and, as a matter of principle, the current procedures requiring the approval of the General Assembly for transfers of posts or resources must be respected.

93. Further information was needed on how the recruitment freeze affected programme implementation. She agreed that the policy of giving priority to sending staff members on peace-keeping missions should be reconsidered if it meant that priority programmes could not be properly implemented.

94. She shared the view that the medium-term plan should be improved so as to fulfil its original purpose as the policy instrument of the Organization in the field of planning and felt that the technical seminar proposed by CPC could help to achieve that goal. She also welcomed the Secretary-General's proposals regarding a new budget format.

95. Mr. WIBISONO (Indonesia) said that he supported the Secretary-General's initiative in reorganizing the Secretariat in order to improve its effectiveness. He welcomed the $4.4 million budget savings achieved by the reduction in high-level posts, but hoped that such savings would not be viewed as the primary goal of the restructuring process, which should serve to enhance the decision-making capacity of the Secretariat, streamline its structure, and contribute to the coherent implementation of all mandates of the Organization. It was vital to ensure that the restructuring undertaken did not have an adverse impact on the various programmes. He noted the lack of information on the programmatic aspects of restructuring in the report of the Secretary-General and supported the recommendation by CPC that the Secretary-General should provide the Assembly with the relevant information on the various qualitative aspects of the restructuring process.

96. With regard to the proposal concerning the prototype of a new budget format (A/C.5/47/3), he supported the recommendation of CPC, hoped that the presentation would be simple and readable, and felt that the quality and accuracy of the narrative could be improved.

97. He expressed appreciation of the Secretariat's efforts to present regular budget and extrabudgetary resources in a uniform manner and believed that the integrity of the budget process should be maintained. He agreed with CPC that the General Assembly should pay due attention to the relationship between mandates, programmes, budget sections and the Secretariat structure.

98. With regard to the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 1994-1995 and the additional priorities proposed by the Secretary-General in his report (A/47/358), he felt that those priorities did not need to be

(Mr. Wibisono, Indonesia)

redefined, since they were clearly stated in resolution 45/253 and included the maintenance of international peace and security, the economic development of developing countries, the economic recovery and development of Africa, the environment, and international drug control. He shared the views expressed by CPC on the question.

99. Referring to the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan, and specifically the programmes on trade and development, he said he agreed with the proposals relating to the priorities for the subprogrammes approved by the Trade and Development Board of UNCTAD and hoped that the recommendations adopted at the eighth session of UNCTAD in Cartagena would be fully respected in any other decision to be made in that regard.

100. With regard to programme 1 (Good offices and peacemaking, peace-keeping, research and the collection of information), he welcomed the Secretary-General's report entitled "An Agenda for Peace" as a timely contribution to the strengthening of the role of the Organization in the maintenance of international peace and security. As the question was currently being discussed in the relevant intergovernmental bodies, he supported the recommendation of CPC that the proposed revisions should be reviewed by the General Assembly in the light of the outcome of those discussions.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
20th meeting
held on
Thursday, 5 November 1992
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 20th MEETING

Chairman: Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria)
(Vice-Chairman)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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In the absence of Mr. Dinu (Romania), Ms. Rotheiser (Austria), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 103: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/46/327 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/47/7/Add.1 and A/47/358; A/C.5/47/2 and Corr.1 and A/C.5/47/16; A/C.5/46/CRP.1)

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1. Mr. CHUINKAM (Cameroon) said that he attached great importance to programme performance reports as a means of ascertaining whether the scarce resources of the United Nations had been judiciously spent. Unfortunately, the report of the Secretary-General on the subject (A/47/159 and Add.1) fell short of expectations in that it failed to provide an analytical picture of programme performance during 1990-1991, particularly with regard to changes affecting programme implementation. In that regard, he agreed with the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) that all activities designated high priority should be implemented.

2. He welcomed the Secretariat's efforts to make the medium-term plan more concise, in line with the provisions of resolution 45/253, and was pleased that it had incorporated into the proposed revisions the mandates derived from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio, the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the first phase of the restructuring process. However, he regretted that only a limited number of the revised programmes had been reviewed by the relevant intergovernmental bodies and therefore fully supported the recommendation of CPC that ways should be found to improve the consideration of the plan and the revisions to the plan by those bodies.

3. Turning to specific programme revisions, he supported the recommendation of CPC that in programme 30 (Regional cooperation for development in Africa) high priority should also be accorded to subprogramme 9 (Women in development), since women in Africa were not only responsible for the bulk of agricultural production, but had also played an effective role in population control, health care and education and were therefore vital to the successful implementation of the programme.

4. While he welcomed the System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, he was concerned that it might meet the same fate as its predecessor, the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic

(Mr. Chuinkam, Cameroon)

Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (UNPAAERD), under which Africa had met its commitments but the international community had failed to do so. He therefore supported the recommendations of CPC that the Secretary-General should launch the System-wide Plan of Action and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s as soon as possible, that the priorities of the Plan should be used as guidelines for United Nations activities related to African development, that the Plan should be monitored and updated in the framework of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force for African Economic Recovery and Development, and that the Secretary-General should play a leading role in its implementation. He welcomed the Secretary-General's decision to create a unit for Africa within the Department of Economic and Social Development and urged that it be given adequate financial and human resources.

5. With regard to programme 38 (Public information), he stressed that United Nations information centres played a vital role in enhancing awareness of the Organization's activities, thereby helping Member States to justify their expenditure on the United Nations in the eyes of public opinion, particularly in the developing countries where resources were so scarce. The centres could also help to provide the Secretary-General with the information he needed to implement the preventive diplomacy measures set out in his report entitled "An Agenda for Peace". He therefore deplored the fact that at present resources were concentrated on a few centres in developed countries and agreed with those members of CPC who had suggested that resources should be redeployed to strengthen centres in the developing countries and countries in transition, in order to comply with the provisions of resolution 46/73 B.

6. Mr. BIDNYI (Russian Federation) said his delegation endorsed the Secretary-General's expectation that a fundamental renewal of the United Nations would be complete by the time of the Organization's fiftieth anniversary (A/47/1, para. 7). The road to genuine renewal, however, lay not only through de-ideologization and de-politicization but also through the rationalization and coordination of the work of the United Nations in close conjunction with Member States. While there was still scope for reform in accordance with the recommendations of the Group of 18, the new mandates entrusted to the Organization made additional measures necessary beyond that context.

7. The satisfactory results of the first stage of restructuring, carried out in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 46/232, were due in large part to the decisive action of the Secretary-General very shortly after taking office. Noting that the international community increasingly viewed reforms as an ongoing process which responded flexibly to the changing situation at the United Nations and throughout the world, his delegation sincerely hoped that the Secretary-General would continue to be guided by that understanding. The essential objective of restructuring must be to create a compact and effective executive apparatus which would both permit appropriate redistribution of human and financial resources when obsolete and marginal programmes were abolished and prevent duplication. His delegation, which

(Mr. Bidnyi, Russian Federation)

fully subscribed to the view that redistribution of resources among programmes and budget sections was not only possible but desirable, believed that such a process was of major importance under conditions of zero budget growth. Considerable use could be made in that connection of the flexibility allowed to the Secretary-General with regard to personnel policies, with a view to ensuring the optimum utilization of human resources.

8. To ensure a more effective United Nations, structural reform must be accompanied by major changes in the Organization's programme activities and a clear definition of priorities, and it would be both short-sighted and wasteful to neglect the current opportunities for change. In that context, it was time for a fresh look at the medium-term plan and a decision as to the extent to which the plan constituted a useful policy document which could both adapt to constantly changing mandates and permit fundamental renewal of the Organization.

9. There was ample scope for rationalization of the Organization's activities in the economic and social spheres, including a more rational distribution of work between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions and the avoidance of duplication between the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly through the removal of certain items from the latter's agenda. Noting the interesting proposals made in that regard at the meetings of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group, his delegation hoped that agreement would be reached on a streamlining of both intergovernmental and Secretariat structures in those spheres.

10. Restructuring of the Secretariat should run in parallel with improved coordination of activities throughout the United Nations system based on an open, honest and constructive dialogue among Member States, the Secretariat, the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and the Secretary-General in his capacity as its Chairman, as well as on close linkage between the technical and substantive aspects of such coordination. Work should be distributed among different agencies in such a way as to avoid duplication and to ensure the best possible use of all the system's resources, and the restructuring initiated in New York should gradually extend to all other bodies. In view of its predominant role in ensuring such coordination, the mandate, methods of work and decision-making process of ACC should perhaps be reviewed. In that connection, his delegation awaited with interest the results of the study mentioned in paragraph 38 of document A/47/1.

11. The Secretary-General's first efforts to rationalize United Nations structures at the field level, including the proposal for unified representation in individual countries, deserved endorsement. His delegation also looked forward to joining in discussions of the interesting proposal regarding the creation of a system-wide inspector-general's office to improve internal auditing and financial control.

(Mr. Bidnyi, Russian Federation)

12. Recognizing the need for well-trained managerial staff, his delegation believed that the Secretariat's proposals for managerial training and increased accountability were in full accordance with the recommendations of CPC in that regard. It also considered the Secretary-General's proposal for a new form of budget presentation to be a further useful step towards improvement and simplification of the budget methodology. In conclusion, it endorsed the Secretary-General's revised estimates for 1992-1993.

13. Mr. OSELLA (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that he had taken note of the figure of $2,410 million for the preliminary estimate for the biennium 1994-1995, given by the Secretary-General in his report (A/47/358). In view of the preliminary and indicative nature of that figure, which might be adjusted once the real activities for the coming biennium had been defined, the countries of the Rio Group wished to reserve their position on the size of the budget for 1994-1995 until full details of its content were available. He also noted the proposed growth rate of 0.2 per cent, which was in line with the policies for budget austerity and stability advocated by the Member States. He welcomed the improvements in the methodology for determining budgetary growth rates but felt that the procedures for calculating variations between successive budgets could be further simplified.

14. Although transparency and discipline in the use of resources were vital, budgetary rigour should not be confused with inflexibility. The budget should be seen as an administrative instrument to facilitate the functioning of the United Nations and budget criteria should be subordinate to the Organization's operational needs and not vice versa. It would be unacceptable to seek to use specific budget criteria as a condition to oblige Member States to meet their financial obligations.

15. The overall priorities of the United Nations were defined in the medium-term plan adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 45/253. Until the Member States decided specifically to modify those priorities, they should remain the only valid ones and the programme budget should be adapted to them. However, in paragraph 12 of his report, the Secretary-General referred to increases in resources for four areas of activity which did not strictly correspond to the priorities set in the medium-term plan. He hoped that the reasons for that anomaly would be explained when the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 was presented in detail.

16. Although he agreed with the Secretary-General that peace and security were closely linked to economic and social development, he felt that both should be seen as objectives in their own right, since social progress and improved living standards were legitimate aspirations and rights of all peoples.

17. Recent experience had shown that the contingency fund was operating in a satisfactory manner and he therefore agreed with the Secretary-General that there were no obvious reasons to change the level of the fund, which currently stood at 0.75 per cent of overall resources.

18. Mr. WU Gang (China), speaking on agenda items 103 and 104, said that his delegation had noted the structural adjustments which had been introduced by the Secretary-General earlier in the year and approved by the General Assembly in resolution 46/232. That resolution had also called on the Secretary-General to submit a report on the programmatic impact of the changes, reflecting the concern of Member States that restructuring should enhance the efficiency of the Organization by enabling it to respond effectively to the requirements of programme activities, rather than being merely a cost-cutting exercise. The proposals for the consolidation of existing units and the reduction in high-level posts should therefore be seen as an effort to streamline decision-making, curb bureaucracy and eliminate duplication, not as measures to weaken the functioning of certain departments or units.

19. As both CPC and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) had pointed out, the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/47/2) dealt only with the financial implications of the restructuring exercise and failed to provide an analysis of their programmatic impact, making it difficult to assess the reliability of the revised estimates. He trusted that the Secretary-General would provide further information on the matter. He also hoped that restructuring would enhance work on the economic and social development of developing countries, which was increasingly important in the post-cold-war era.

20. He stressed that reform should continue to be carried out on the basis of full and extensive consultation with Member States and in accordance with the principles which they had advocated for many years, namely that the aim of reform should be to improve the administrative and financial efficiency of the Organization and strengthen its unique role in international affairs, and that it should not adversely affect the implementation of programme activities or jeopardize the principle of equitable geographical distribution of posts.

21. The Secretary-General had stressed that efficient use of human resources and the abiity to respond rapidly to changing needs required a certain degree of flexibility in human resources management. However, his delegation felt that the establishment of posts should be determined by the actual workload of the various units; it was unacceptable constantly to increase staff in certain units without providing the General Assembly with information concerning post requirements. He found it difficult to understand why as many as 74 posts had been identified for redeployment for only a one-year period following the adoption of the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993, since it cast doubt on the seriousness of the whole budgetary process. He agreed with CPC that flexibility in the treatment of vacancies must be examined in the context of the existing financial rules and regulations. He hoped that the Secretary-General would provide the information requested by ACABQ in order to facilitate consideration of the issue. He also agreed with the arrangements proposed by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/47/7 for the 13 posts in UNCTAD.

22. Mr. FAZLE MAHMOOD (Pakistan) said that in some cases the Secretariat had redeployed posts without ascertaining the views of the Member States directly affected. While the aim of the restructuring exercise was to ensure the efficient operation of the system, it was vital that it should not affect programme areas, especially in the economic and social fields, which were of particular importance for developing countries.

23. He would appreciate information concerning the departments of origin of the 22 redeployed posts shown in the table in paragraph 8 of document A/47/7/Add.1. Measures to enhance efficiency should seek to ensure that staffing increases in one sector did not deplete other sectors. The aim was not to eliminate posts but to ensure a more logical distribution of the workload. Problems in programme implementation should not be solved by the elimination of the department concerned; on the contrary, departments engaged in activities beneficial to Member States should be strengthened and expanded as part of a consolidated plan focusing on every aspect of the system. The 7 per cent vacancy rate referred to in the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/47/2, para. 17) could be used for the redeployment of staff without any impact on the budget.

24. While his delegation appreciated the constraints faced by the Secretary-General in his efforts to adjust to current requirements, it felt that the existing machinery was preferable, and that the current procedure governing transfers of posts, in accordance with financial regulation 4.5 and financial rule 104.4, should be retained. The General Assembly should be the final arbiter in that regard, due account being taken of intergovernmental concerns.

25. The magnitude of the changes involved in the restructuring exercise made it necessary for them not only to be communicated to the General Assembly and the Advisory Committee, but also to be subjected to detailed examination. The Secretary-General needed more flexibility in managing the Organization's financial resources, but it was essential that any changes proposed should be subjected to intergovernmental scrutiny before they were adopted.

26. In conclusion, he emphasized that any activity related to the restructuring must be in line with the Charter and its principles. That was the only way in which the Organization could play its proper role of maintaining peace and promoting progress and prosperity.

27. Mr. SIAKALENGE (Zambia) said that his delegation supported the conclusions and recommendations of CPC and the Advisory Committee, as well as certain aspects of the Secretary-General's proposals in regard to the items under consideration. He wished to stress, however, that the principal aim of the review was to identify measures and mechanisms that would enhance the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the Organization and he would urge the Secretary-General to ensure that political, economic and social issues were not sacrificed to peace and security matters.

(Mr. Siakalenge, Zambia)

28. The restructuring process had affected not only major programmes and activities in the political, economic and social fields but also Secretariat support structures and a number of staff members. His delegation welcomed the reduction in the number of senior officials reporting to the Secretary-General through the regrouping of some major functions. The merging of some functions could, however, damage certain programmes, including some of particular interest to developing countries. The suggestion regarding the establishment of a post of inspector-general at the Under-Secretary-General level confirmed his delegation's suspicion that the sequence of the reforms had not been properly thought out. There seemed to be little merit in abolishing posts at the Under-Secretary-General level only to recommend the establishment of new ones shortly thereafter.

29. It was important for the Secretariat to specify both the programmatic and the financial implications of the reform process and to provide an assurance that the process would not negatively affect programmes critical to the development of developing countries. In essence, his delegation was calling upon the Secretariat and Member States to ensure that there was no deliberate effort during the reform process to erode the United Nations Charter.

30. As far as flexibility in the management of staff resources was concerned, his delegation would prefer any major constraints in legislative and administrative structures first to be identified by the Fifth Committee, which could then consider how mechanisms could be designed to address them.

31. Noting that the final appropriation for the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 would be determined by the Fifth Committee in the light of the revised estimates submitted by the Secretary-General, he said that, while the estimates reflected the financial implications of decisions adopted by certain intergovernmental bodies, the programmatic implications were given less emphasis. Activities mandated by the General Assembly should not be changed or altered by the Secretariat without the Assembly's explicit authorization.

32. It appeared that the members of CPC and of the Fifth Committee had received the Secretary-General's report on the restructuring process with mixed feelings. With regard to the suppression, creation and redeployment of posts, his delegation was well known to disapprove of practices at variance with the regulations and rules governing programme planning. He stressed the importance of priority-setting as an integral part of the planning, programming and budgeting process and said that his delegation had taken note of the steps taken by the Secretary-General to enhance general awareness of the Organization's budgetary process and improve the programmatic content of the budget.

33. Mr. LORET (Cuba) said that it was essential to accept the programme planning rule that programmes, subprogrammes and programme elements must be based on intergovernmental mandates officially handed down by legislative bodies through relevant resolutions and decisions. Secretariat proposals should not be used as legislative mandates. The Secretary-General was entitled to make the proposals he regarded as necessary, as part of his mandate under the Charter, but those proposals should be submitted to the appropriate intergovernmental bodies, not to the technical bodies responsible for planning - CPC and the Fifth Committee. Unfortunately, in some cases, the proposals had been neither presented to nor accepted by the appropriate intergovernmental bodies. They should therefore be postponed until those bodies had had an opportunity to discharge their responsibilities. It was particularly disturbing that the Secretariat had not taken steps to advise the other Main Committees to include the consideration of proposals for revision that came within their respective mandates in their work programmes. He wondered whether that failure was due to incompetence or to an implicit desire to avoid involving the specialized intergovernmental bodies.

34. In an unprecedented step, the traditional practice of allowing observers to participate actively in the decision-making process in CPC had been discontinued. If the recommendations of CPC were to be helpful to the Fifth Committee, the necessary steps should be taken to restore a practice which had helped to secure consensus in the Fifth Committee.

35. He endorsed the comments made by previous speakers on the need to simplify the format of the medium-term plan and the procedures for its revision. He believed, however, that the current system already provided the means of bringing about such a simplification. What was needed was a further refinement of the planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluating arrangements. In that connection, he welcomed the proposal regarding the holding of a technical seminar on programme planning, whether or not it would result in additional cost to the Organization.

36. Turning to the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 (A/47/6), he said that a new and politically very sensitive concept, which had been neither defined nor endorsed by the General Assembly, had been introduced into the titles of programme 1 and subprogramme 1, as well as into the structure, priorities and narrative of that subprogramme. He referred to the term "preventive diplomacy", which occurred also in the narrative of other programmes. Some Member States had sought to give legitimacy to certain political concepts through the so-called evolutionary interpretation of the Charter. Some of those concepts appeared in the report entitled "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277-S/24111). In paragraph 1.10 of subprogramme 1, an attempt was made to use that document as a legislative mandate. However, as a number of delegations had pointed out, both in the Fifth Committee and in CPC, the Secretary-General's proposals were currently under consideration by the General Assembly and could not therefore constitute a legislative mandate at present. In various passages of the programme narrative, particularly in subprogramme 3, reference was made to "threats to peace", "conflict areas",

(Mr. Loret, Cuba)

"disputes" and "developments related to peace and security" without the addition of the word "international". He would like an assurance from the Secretariat that that was an involuntary omission, otherwise he would require an explanation from the representative of the Secretary-General.

37. With regard to programme 2, "Political and Security Council affairs", the programme's title was not in accordance with its content, since the General Assembly, through the First Committee, also dealt with matters relating to international peace and security.

38. The proposed amendments to programme 4, "Special political questions, trusteeship and decolonization", contradicted the statement (A/47/6 (Prog. 4), para. 3) that the revisions did not reflect a fundamental change in the mandate, orientation and strategy of the programme. The proposal for the inclusion of a new subprogramme 4, entitled "Enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections", was unacceptable as it did not fall within the general orientation of the programme. In connection with the reference to General Assembly resolution 46/137 as the legislative mandate, he drew attention to the omission of any reference to resolution 46/130, which was equally relevant as a legislative mandate - an omission that required an explanation from the Secretariat - and to the fact that the topic formed an integral part of programme 35 and should appear there. Moreover, there was no legislative authority for the statement in paragraph 4.39 that the functions of the Electoral Assistance Unit would be to "assist Member States in the holding and verificaton of elections as a mechanism to promote peacemaking, further the enhancement of human rights and provide development assistance". The Secretariat should explain the origin of that condition for the provision of development assistance. Lastly, the new orientation proposed for subprogramme 2 was linked to previous proposals by certain Member States which the Secretary-General had recapitulated in "An Agenda for Peace". The final decision on the subprogramme should be taken in the light of the General Assembly's ultimate decision in that connection.

39. Pending the receipt of the views of the Fourth Committee on the content of programme 6, "Elimination of apartheid", he wished to draw attention to the proposed new paragraph 6.36, which included a reference to consensus resolutions that was unacceptable and would constitute a very dangerous precedent. All resolutions, whether adopted by consensus or not, provided the legislative mandate for the medium-term plan.

40. With regard to programme 38, "Public information", the mandate of the Department of Public Information and, in particular, of the information centres, should be maintained. The proposal that the responsibilities of the former Office for Research and the Collection of Information should be transferred to the Department of Public Information was unacceptable.

(Mr. Loret, Cuba)

41. The Committee should await the results of the discussions and negotiations in the other Main Committees, without which it could not take decisions on programmes which were of a political nature or were outside its own terms of reference.

42. Mr. BARIMANI (Islamic Republic of Iran), commenting on the follow-up report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the Management Advisory Service (A/46/327), said that every organization was constantly challenged to manage its human resources efficiently and to preserve and enhance the coherence of its policy with regard to organizational structure, working environment and procedural improvements. Effective internal management machinery could help to realize those objectives.

43. An in-house management consulting group had existed in the United Nations since 1968. Acting on the advice of the Advisory Committee, the Secretary-General had reconstituted that group as the Administrative Management Service in 1969; it had been given the immediate task of surveying manpower utilization in the Secretariat and its recommendations, once accepted by the Secretary-General, were expected to be implemented by the responsible Secretariat officials. However, as the report pointed out, after various reorganizations, the impact of what was now called the Management Advisory Service had grown negligible and a further reorientation of its activities and organizational arrangements seemed to be called for. His delegation therefore welcomed the report and agreed in principle with its findings and recommendations. It recognized the need for a strong internal management consulting service which could be used to improve management structures, streamline systems and procedures, help to achieve cost efficiency and enhance the Organization's overall effectiveness. There was a greater need than ever for a more independent management mechanism, capable of sustaining the evolving functions of the United Nations in the most effective manner. The report emphasized that point, and also recommended that greater use should be made of modern practices and techniques in order to improve overall management capacity.

44. Mr. IRUMBA (Uganda) said that restructuring was not an end in itself. The purpose of the exercise was to improve the delivery of mandated programmes in the most cost-effective manner. It was important to determine whether the reforms undertaken so far had been effective.

45. There had been a regrettable tendency to equate reform or restructuring with staff reductions, in particular the elimination of high-level posts. The welfare and morale of international civil servants had not been given due attention by Member States. If any organization was to perform efficiently, its staff must be well motivated, not only by the cause they served but also by their conditions of service. Since 1986, the Secretariat staff had laboured under a constant fear of their posts being abolished. Such an atmosphere was not conducive to effective performance.

(Mr. Irumba, Uganda)

46. In some instances, improved programme delivery might entail staff reductions or the consolidation of Secretariat units. There might also be a need to create new positions or structures when new activities were undertaken. Whatever the case, depending on the challenges facing the Organization, Member States needed to determine the resources available and the size and quality of the staff needed.

47. In the context of the implementation of resolution 41/213, the General Assembly had requested analytical reports showing how restructuring was proceeding and whether efficiency was being enhanced. The Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session (A/45/226) had stated that it was impossible at that time to identify more high-level posts for further reductions without an adverse impact on programmes. His delegation had been sympathetic to that position. At its forty-sixth session, however, the General Assembly had accepted new proposals by the Secretary-General for further reductions in high-level posts. His delegation had been somewhat surprised that, despite increasing mandates, it had been possible to make more reductions. Despite its misgivings, however, it had not challenged the Secretary-General's proposals. Many Member States, especially the developing countries, had been apprehensive about the adverse impact of the changes on programme delivery and the possibility that they might alter priorities already agreed upon. For that reason, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to submit a report not only on the financial implications of organizational changes but on their impact on mandated programmes.

48. While the latest report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/47/2) indicated the financial implications of the changes initiated, it failed to respond to the General Assembly's request for information on their programmatic impact. His delegation shared the concern expressed by both CPC and the Advisory Committee regarding the lack of that information.

49. The changes that had been initiated included the downgrading of the Department of Conference Services. His delegation hoped that there was no intention to diminish the importance attached to conference servicing, which played a critical role in facilitating dialogue between Member States. Adequate conference servicing and documentation were essential to multilateral diplomacy. Deep cuts in that area could frustrate endeavours to harmonize international action.

50. In the course of the debate on the pattern of conferences, a number of speakers had complained of intergovernmental bodies being handicapped by delays in the issuance of documents. His delegation agreed that such delays were unfortunate. The introduction of technological innovations had promised to be a way out of that difficulty but did not seem to have enhanced conference servicing. It might be time to review the situation.

(Mr. Irumba, Uganda)

51. As part of its response to the financial crisis, the General Assembly had agreed that a number of intergovernmental bodies should not have summary records. The biennialization and triennialization of meetings had also become a common feature. While such measures might be understandable in view of the financial crisis, the Organization should not make a virtue of necessity. The curtailment of documentation and the inability to provide summary records could not enhance efficiency in the conduct of business. The situation with regard to conference services should therefore be reviewed and remedial action taken as soon as the financial situation permitted. Within its mandate, the Committee on Conferences had performed well. However, its role vis-à-vis other Committees was that of a facilitator and not a policeman. His delegation would resist any moves to change its mandate and give it a budgetary role or the power to override decisions taken by other intergovernmental bodies.

52. The time had come to restate the relationship between the Secretary-General, as chief administrative officer, and the Member States, which must be one of mutual respect based on their respective mandates. It was the role of Member States to determine programmes and appropriate resources, and to ensure that resources were applied to the programmes for which they had been appropriated. Such a role did not represent micromanagement, merely the enforcement of accountability.

53. In the context of restructuring, his delegation expected the Secretary-General to report on a continuing basis on the administrative and financial functioning of the Organization. That would help to put the revised estimates into perspective. General Assembly resolutions 41/213 and 46/232 called for consultation between the Secretary-General and Member States, a process that would build confidence in a situation where the impact of redeploying resources was not clear but might well prove negative. His delegation would welcome a revised programme budget which clearly indicated legislative mandates and how activities and outputs would be affected.

54. The Secretary-General had asked for greater flexibility to enable him to adapt staff resources to changing circumstances. His intention seemed to be to redeploy resources between sections. His delegation did not think that there was a need for any greater degree of flexibility under the Financial Rules and Regulations. It could only lead to the marginalization of the Advisory Committee and of the General Assembly. There might also be a danger of programmes being starved of resources through the redeployment of resources to other programmes; that would, in effect, neutralize the intent of the General Assembly with regard to their relative importance.

55. He noted that, while several high-level posts in the economic and social fields had been eliminated, a new post had been created at the Under-Secretary-General level in connection with preparations for the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization. His delegation was not clear as to how a post at that level fitted into the staffing table, what the anticipated

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activities and outputs were, or what changes they might represent in terms of outputs. Furthermore, it was not clear why preparations for the fiftieth anniversary could not be modelled on those for the fortieth anniversary.

56. The Acting Controller had referred to the redeployment of some 30 vacant posts and he noted that the Centre for Human Rights, as a priority area, had been treated generously. His delegation recalled that the critical situation in Africa was also a priority, and wished to know whether consideration was being given to increasing resources accordingly. The publication African Recovery, which had played an important role in mobilizing awareness of the critical economic situation in Africa, had been largely financed from extrabudgetary resources and he wondered whether resources could now be assured.

57. Turning to the medium-term plan, he said he agreed with the view that its format should be simplified so as to make it more useful. The suggestion by CPC regarding the convening of a seminar to consider a prototype of a possible new format was sound. It was important, however, not to sacrifice transparency in the process.

58. The world was characterized by inequalities of wealth and power, which were sometimes reflected in the multilateral institutions established by Member States. The aim of the changes taking place within the Secretariat was the laudable one of promoting efficiency and avoiding duplication, yet institutional change carried with it the risk that the influence of the strong might predominate at the expense of the weak. Priorities could be tilted in favour of a few areas at the cost of other, vitally important, ones. The maintenance of international peace and security was important, but it seemed that equal importance was not being given to the economic and social areas, in which the United Nations could play a major role.

59. Mr. TANG Guangting (China), speaking on agenda item 105, said that the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 was the outcome of arduous efforts. As mandated by the General Assembly, it was the principal policy directive of the Organization, and every effort should be made to maintain its status.

60. While changes in the world situation necessitated revisions to the initial version of the medium-term plan, the basic purpose of such revisions was to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations so that it could better implement the activities mandated by the General Assembly. Accordingly, his delegation concurred in the observation by CPC (A/47/16 (Part II), para. 18) that the concept of sustainable development in the proposed revisions to a number of programmes should be construed as adding a new dimension to their implementation.

61. With regard to the identification of priority programmes in the medium-term plan, revisions to the plan should reflect the concerns of the majority of Member States in the five priority areas: the maintenance of

(Mr. Tang Guangting, China)

international peace and security, the economic development of developing countries, the economic recovery and development of Africa, the environment, and international drug control. In particular, given the increasingly serious economic difficulties of developing countries, revisions to the medium-term plan should focus on priority programmes relating to the economic development of developing countries and to the recovery and development of Africa.

62. His delegation regretted that only a limited number of the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan had been reviewed by intergovernmental bodies. Such reviews should be sought first. Lastly, with regard to the proposed revisions to programme 4 of major programme I, his delegation maintained the reservations it had expressed at the thirty-second session of CPC.

63. Mr. BAUDOT (Acting Controller) said that the United Nations was at a critical juncture in terms of how the problems relating to its functioning would be addressed. It should be recalled that the essential aim of the restructuring exercise was to improve the effectiveness with which the Organization implemented the mandates established by Member States. The attempt at streamlining, the elimination of levels that complicated the decision-making process, and the quest for greater coherence in implementation were all facets of that approach. The fact that for the time being it was not possible to foretell the exact impact of the restructuring on mandates should not be seen as a cover-up. In an exercise of such magnitude, problems were bound to occur. With the cooperation of Member States, the Secretariat would do its utmost to implement the outputs indicated in the budget for the biennium 1992-1993. The Committee would be kept informed of the impact of the restructuring on programme implementation.

64. With regard to the relationship between the restructuring and the budgetary processes, it should be recalled that the budget was an instrument, and not, in itself, an objective, and that it should serve to facilitate, rather than impede, the reform process. Member States, through the Committee, would be able to monitor the impact of the reforms. There were some difficulties, including the possibility that the budget would always be trying to catch up with the reform process. Apart from the revised estimates now before the Committee, if the Secretary-General's reform proposals necessitated further revised estimates before the preparation of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, the Assembly would be so informed, possibly at a resumed session early in 1993. Delegations could thus be assured that any changes necessitated by the reform process would, if not already reflected in the revised estimates now before the Committee, be indicated in additional revised estimates to be submitted to the Assembly. Most of the changes introduced by the Secretary-General would, however, be reflected in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, which would be available to delegations in the spring of 1993.

(Mr. Baudot)

65. With regard to the elimination of high-level posts, the Committee would note that only the General Assembly could establish or abolish posts. In that connection, the revised estimates before the Committee contained certain proposals and any further proposals of that nature would be submitted through the normal channels. A distinction should be drawn between posts and functions and the Secretary-General should be able to employ some of the resources under his management to functions at a level comparable to the high-level posts under consideration by the Committee.

66. On the question of flexibility in the use of human resources, he said that what the Secretary-General sought was a more realistic approach to the current requirement that he should inform either the General Assembly or the Advisory Committee of the temporary transfer of posts from one section of the budget to another. It had quite rightly been pointed out that flexibility could lead to selectivity in the implementation of the mandated programmes. However, such post transfers were used only to fine-tune programme budget implementation in order to ensure the proper implementation of all programmes. Such changes were necessary in part because the techniques used to determine budget allocations were imperfect. Also, from the operational standpoint, the decentralization of decision-making for the various programmes had been allowed to lead to a situation in which it was difficult to get a general overview of the problems of post distribution within the Secretariat.

67. He agreed that there must be a very clear relationship between flexibility and transparency; if the Secretary-General were to be given greater flexibility in the management of posts, it would be necessary to ensure that the General Assembly, ACABQ and CPC were informed of any post movements. Although he did not have anything further to add at present regarding the 74 posts to be redeployed that he had mentioned in his introductory remarks, the General Assembly would be informed of any actual redeployments before the end of the current session.

68. With respect to the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan, he would reply to the specific questions raised when the various sections of the plan were discussed. He observed, however, that the plan was the basic policy document for the preparation of the programme budget and must reflect all mandates in the form of programmes to be incorporated into the programme budget. As for the consultation of Member States, he hoped that, if the programme planning seminar proposed by CPC was approved, an item on the processes needed to improve such consultations would be included in the agenda.

69. In closing, he said that he would answer the many, often very technical, questions which he had left unanswered at the beginning of the informal consultations.

AGENDA ITEM 111: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/47/11)

70. Mr. HASSANOV (Azerbaijan) said that, by distributing the rate calculated for the entire Soviet Union among the republics of the former USSR, the Committee on Contributions had established an excessively high assessment for his country. Its contribution should be established independently of the assessment applied to the former Soviet Union, particularly because that State's contribution did not correspond to the real level of its economic development, reflecting instead its political ambitions as a super-Power. Furthermore, the President of the Russian Federation had affirmed his country's full responsibility for all the rights and obligations of the former USSR under the Charter, including its financial obligations.

71. Another problem lay in the use by the Committee of national income and population statistics for the period 1980-1989 and of the artificially maintained rate of exchange for the Soviet currency during that period. Under a rigidly centralized system of trade between the different republics, his country estimated that some 20 per cent of its national income during the 1980s had been taken out of the Republic without any compensation. Meanwhile, the current severe economic slump would, by preliminary estimates, reduce national income by almost 20 per cent. The situation was complicated by the continuing confrontation with Armenia, which had entailed enormous losses and massive expenditure on refugees. The estimates of the country's per capita income submitted to the Committee were not borne out in studies of its current economic situation carried out by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Yet another constraint lay in the country's shortage of currency reserves and the fact that many of its valuable assets remained frozen in the Bank for Foreign Economic Affairs of the former USSR.

72. His country was not calling for a radical review of the methodology used to calculate the scale of assessments. It was prepared to discharge fully its obligations under the Charter, including its financial obligations. However, it believed that the Committee on Contributions should promptly re-examine the issue of assessments for the republics of the former Soviet Union by taking account of the real exchange rate of the rouble and the actual economic situation of the countries concerned, in coordination with experts from IMF and the World Bank.

73. Mr. CHUINKAM (Cameroon) said that, given the diverse economic circumstances of Member States, the Committee on Contributions would always face an uphill battle in its efforts to arrive at a universally acceptable methodology for the apportionment of the Organization's expenses. His delegation was pleased to note that the Committee had based its work on General Assembly resolution 46/221 and hoped that the Fifth Committee would be able to make an informed decision on the basis of its report (A/47/11).

(Mr. Chuinkam, Cameroon)

74. With respect to the illustrative machine scales appearing in annex III A to the report, his delegation thought that the 10-year base period should be reduced to 5 years. It saw no logic in asking a Member State to pay more than it could pay now on the basis of its theoretical capacity in the future, especially since the economic situation had been deteriorating for the past six years in the developing countries. It was no coincidence that most of the Member States which were currently denied their voting rights under Article 19 of the Charter were developing countries.

75. If applied, the concept of debt-adjusted income would raise the rates of assessment of some indebted developing countries, and, contrary to the assertions of some members of the Committee on Contributions, his delegation doubted that the increase would be compensated by the adjustments mentioned in paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 46/221 B. It agreed, however, with the Committee's comments on the low per capita income allowance formula, in paragraph 8 of its report.

76. His delegation still maintained that there was no viable alternative to the scheme of limits, and it regretted that the Committee had not seen its way to complying with paragraph 3 (f) of resolution 46/221 B, in which it was asked to report on a method for phasing out that scheme which would avoid the allocation of additional points to developing countries. In the circumstances, it concurred with those members of the Committee on Contributions who had recommended phasing out the scheme of limits using ad hoc adjustments.

77. It greatly appreciated the Committee's efforts to identify ways of improving the methodology to be used for future scales. In its view, Member States would be willing to provide data on time regarding dependency on one or a few products, negative net flow of resources and limited capacity to acquire convertible currencies if they knew that such data would be used in the future methodology. It fully associated itself with the members of the Committee who thought that the rates shown in column 4 of annex V most accurately reflected the capacity to pay of Member States. It did not, however, see any need for a review of the principle of capacity to pay by an independent, high-level body.

78. What was at stake was the issue of equity. Any scale that did not reflect the ability to pay would only increase the number of Member States penalized under Article 19 of the Charter.

AGENDA ITEM 112: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/47/140 and Add.1, A/47/168 and Add.1, A/47/415, A/47/508; A/C.5/47/5, A/C.5/47/6, A/C.5/47/9, A/C.5/47/14, A/C.5/47/20; A/C.5/46/2, A/C.5/46/7, A/C.5/46/9, A/C.5/46/13 and A/C.5/46/16)

79. Mr. FAZLE MAHMOOD (Pakistan) said that, with the growing demands being made on the United Nations, the efficiency of its staff was of paramount importance. That efficiency would best be achieved by ensuring that the

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recruitment policy complied with the principles laid down in Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter. The first step was to offer attractive terms of service to qualified people from different regions. Next, it was necessary to provide for training, career development and mobility, which could help to improve leadership and initiative. Pakistan was concerned to note that only 0.29 per cent of the Secretariat's staff costs were currently devoted to occupational and management training and agreed that the Organization needed to establish a basic staff development policy with a long-term perspective, especially in view of its increased involvement in the areas of peace-keeping and conflict prevention.

80. His delegation shared the concerns expressed by others that less than 10 per cent of all United Nations posts were subject to geographical distribution. The Secretary-General had explained why some categories of staff were excluded from geographical distribution (A/47/416, paras. 11 to 13). However, in view of the international character of the Organization and its increased involvement in peace-keeping, consideration should be given to adding certain Field Service and General Service posts, including posts with special language requirements, to those subject to geographical distribution.

81. The comprehensive report on alternative options for desirable ranges for the geographical distribution of staff in the Professional category and above (A/C.5/46/2) would make it easier to achieve a better balance among the three criteria - membership, contribution and population. In that regard, he agreed with previous speakers that greater weight should be attached to the population factor, and it hoped that the Fifth Committee would give serious consideration to the matter.

82. His delegation noted that the increase in the number of unrepresented countries was mainly due to the admission of several new Member States, and it was glad to see that the number of underrepresented States had declined. Immediate steps should, however, be taken to close the gap between the developed and the developing countries, especially with respect to the representation of women from developing countries. It was encouraging to see that the proportion of women in posts subject to geographical distribution had increased by 1.4 per cent between 30 June 1988 and 30 June 1992, but that trend must be accelerated if the target of 35 per cent was to be reached by 1995.

83. Referring to the statement made by the former Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, he asked how many of the 584 Professional and 1,019 General Service posts assigned to peace-keeping operations had been created since 1 January 1990. He would also like to know the criteria that had been used in recruiting candidates for those posts from outside the Secretariat, including a breakdown of the posts by geographical region. Lastly, he wondered if a list might be made available of the departments from which Professional and General Service staff had been reassigned to peace-keeping missions.

(Mr. Fazle Mahmood, Pakistan)

84. While the aim of the restructuring exercise was to enhance efficiency, it had adversely affected programme delivery, especially in the economic and social fields. The second phase of the restructuring should be directed towards achieving a more logical distribution of the workload and not merely the elimination of posts or the strengthening one area at the expense of another.

85. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) said that the staffing problems created by the ongoing financial crisis, the restructuring of the Secretariat and the freeze on recruitment had been complicated by the increasing number of peace-keeping operations. With many United Nations officials now reassigned to peace-keeping missions, it was necessary to find competent replacements. His delegation commended the Office of Human Resources Management for its tireless efforts to relieve the concerns of the staff, improve their qualifications through ongoing training and provide better avenues for career development. It also commended the entire staff of the Organization, who continued to work ably and selflessly, sometimes under very difficult conditions.

86. With respect to the composition of the Secretariat, 2,608 posts subject to geographical distribution represented a very small percentage. While there were good reasons for excluding certain categories of posts from geographical distribution, his delegation believed that the number of posts subject to it could be increased within the Secretariat. In addition, United Nations organs with special status in matters of appointment should make an effort to respect the general principle of equitable geographical distribution to the extent possible.

87. There seemed little reason for concern regarding the rapid increase in the number of unrepresented countries, since it could be attributed to the admission of 19 new Member States in the midst of a recruitment freeze, and it was encouraging to note the decline in the number of underrepresented States. However, many countries, including Morocco, had not seen any improvement in their representation in senior-level posts despite the request by the General Assembly in resolution 45/239. Efforts to correct that situation were all the more imperative since, according to document A/47/416, table C, there had actually been a slight decline in the representation of developing countries, especially in the upper echelons. Furthermore, it was important to respect the principle that no post should be considered the exclusive preserve of any Member State. Lastly, he hoped that the Secretariat would continue its efforts to ensure the representation of the various legal systems in its legal departments, in accordance with resolution 45/239.

88. Noting the progress made in increasing the representation of women in the Secretariat, he urged the Secretary-General to pursue his efforts to achieve the targets set by the General Assembly by 1995.

89. With regard to the system of desirable ranges, his country continued to believe that there should be a better way of ensuring the equitable

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geographical representation of Member States. In seeking new methodologies, there was no need to retain the three factors - membership, contribution and population - on which the current system was based. The weight given to the contribution factor placed developing countries at a disadvantage, while that given to the population factor decreased the representation of small countries. Morocco agreed, however, with the Secretary-General that one of the problems of the present system lay in achieving the proper balance among those factors; any change in their weighting would be certain to make the representation of Member States more equitable.

90. It was very important for United Nations staff to be highly motivated, which was why the Organization needed to provide both favourable conditions of service and satisfactory avenues for career advancement. His delegation agreed with the view expressed by the Secretary-General in paragraph 5 of his report on career development (A/C.5/47/6), that the critical components of a career development system included such elements as human resources planning, staff training and development, staff mobility and promotion. Training was especially important, since both mobility and, to some extent, promotion depended on it. It also allowed employees to keep up to date and to adapt to changing job requirements. His delegation therefore welcomed the various training programmes planned by the Office of Human Resources Management. While the training programme as a whole might be costly, it was a necessary investment if the United Nations was to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century successfully.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.